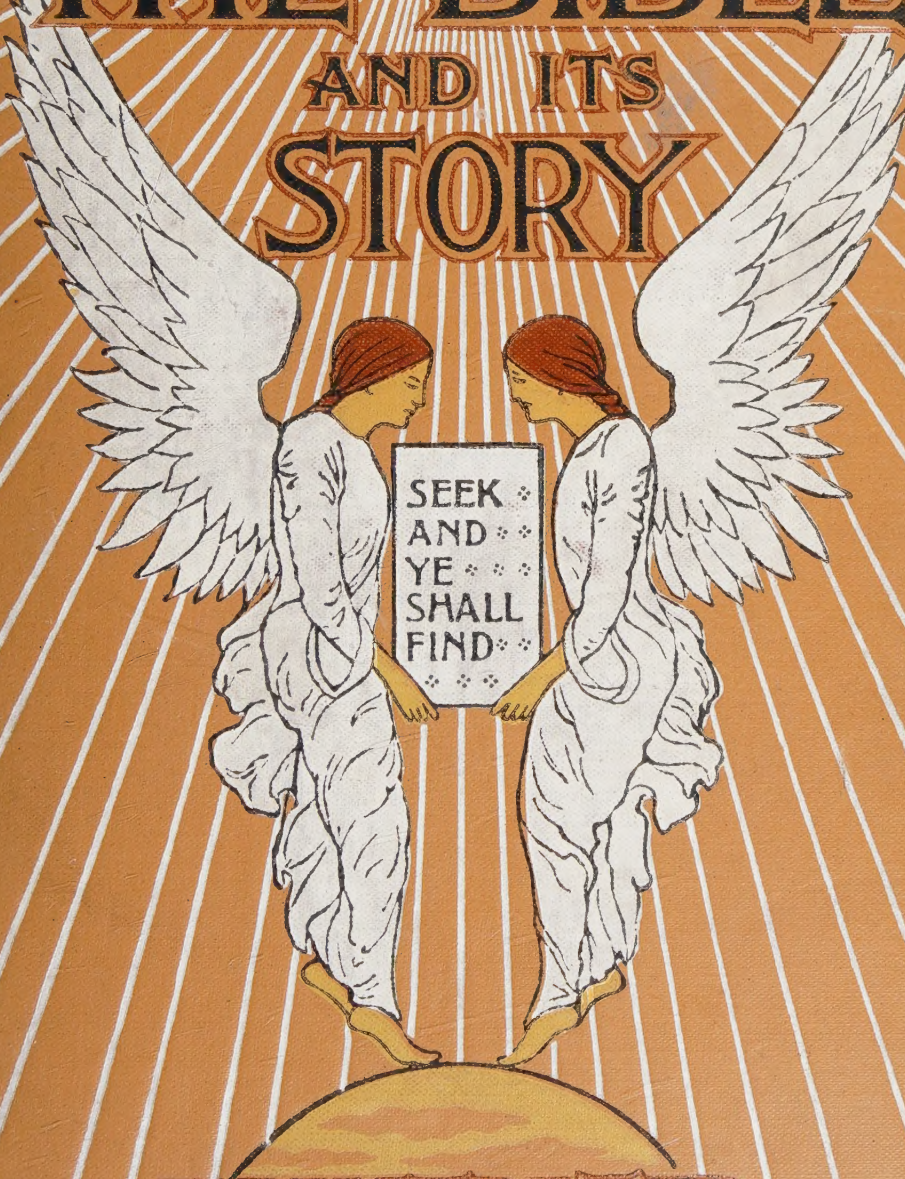
THE BIBLE AND ITS STORY



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Miss Eula Cook.

CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

THE BIBLE
AND ITS STORY

...BY...

JOSEPHINE POLLARD

Author of "The History of the New Testament in Words of One Syllable," "History of Old Testament," "Battles of America," etc., etc.

PHILADELPHIA:
DAVID McKAY, PUBLISHER,
604-8 SOUTH WASHINGTON SQUARE.

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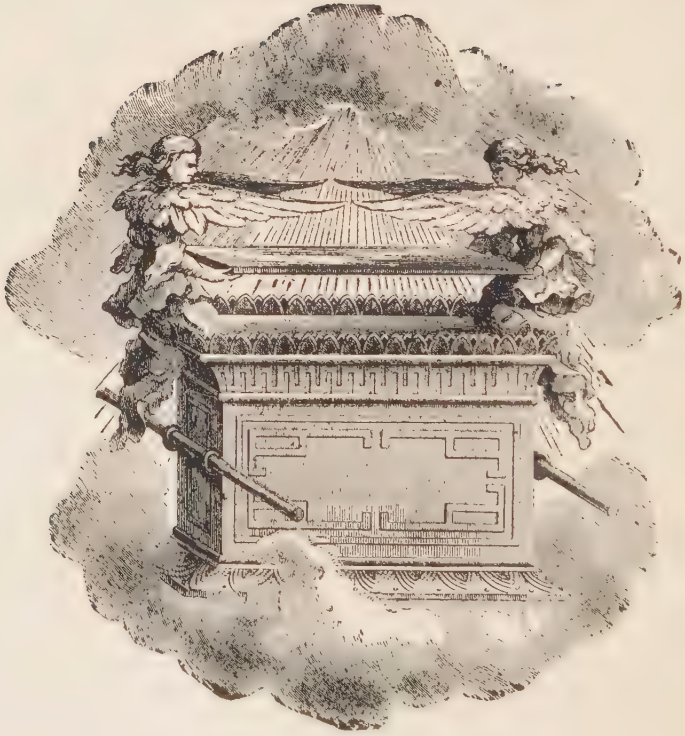


THE BIBLE: AND ITS STORY.

CHAPTER I.

HOW THE BIBLE CAME TO US.

The volume which Christians consider the most sacred of all books, and which they are taught from their earliest years to love and reverence as the Bible, differs from all other volumes which ever have been or ever will be written, in that it was composed neither by one man, nor at one time, nor in one language.

For though the Bible came from God, it was not given all at once in the complete form in which we now have it, but different men at different times were each divinely inspired to write a portion of it. The first of these was Moses, who lived nearly fifteen hundred years before the birth of Jesus. The last was St. John, who died a hundred years after the opening of the Christian era. During the sixteen hundred years which thus elapsed between its commencement and completion, thirty-six men or more were moved by the will of God at various periods of time to contribute a portion of the great work, and these writers employed the language most familiar to them or to the people about them, some using Chaldee, some Hebrew, some Greek, and some perhaps other tongues of which the Bible to-day shows no trace. It is on account of this diverse authorship that the name of Scriptures is so generally applied to the Bible, *scriptures* being the Latin term for *writings*. And as each part of the Scriptures is called a *book*, the whole of them taken together were called by the Greek name for *books*, which is Bible. The words *Holy* and *Sacred* are often placed before Bible and Scriptures to show the divine origin of the volume.

The greater part of the Bible (more than three-fourths of the whole) was written before the birth of Christ and is known as the Old Testament. There were twenty-eight (perhaps more) authors of this part, some of them writing in Chaldee, but most of them in Hebrew. The Chaldee portion of it, however, was translated into Hebrew (the language of the Jews) at least four hundred years before the advent of the Saviour, and all of the Old Testament was translated into Greek about a hundred years later (300 B.C.). This Greek version is said to have been made by seventy learned Jews of Alexandria, and so received the name of the Septuagint, which is derived from a Latin word meaning *seventy*. Greek was selected for this purpose as it was at that period the most commonly spoken language in the world, and the Septuagint soon became the version most in use among the Jews.

The word *testament* means *will*. The Old Testament is thus the revelation of God's former (or older) will to his people. With the birth of Christ God made a new revelation of his will, and this is contained in the New Testament. There were eight authors of the New Testament, and they all wrote in Greek, so that that tongue became the language of the entire Bible. But as Rome extended her conquests, Greek gave way to Latin as the common language of the world, and within a few centuries after the foundation of Christianity several Latin translations of the Bible were made, one of which was adopted by the Roman Catholic Church and is still used by that Church in all of its services. It is called the Vulgate because it was made for the use of the people, and *vulgus* is one of the Latin words for *people*.

For about a thousand years the Greek and the Latin versions were the only ones at all generally used throughout Christendom. At various times during this period attempts were made to translate parts of the sacred text or the whole of it into more modern languages, but none of them met with any great or lasting success. When, however, the Reformation took place, the churches which separated from the Roman Catholic communion decided to give up the Vulgate and use in its stead versions in the languages of their own countries. The great Reformer, Martin Luther, made a translation into German

which is still used by the Protestants of Germany, and Wycliffe, Tyndale, and other Reformers in Great Britain did similar work for their countrymen. These early English versions, however, though they had great excellences and were an immense help to the Protestant cause, did not secure as permanent a hold on the people of England as Luther's did on the Germans, nor did the accuracy of their translation quite meet with the approval of biblical students of the time. James I., therefore, summoned together in 1607 a body of forty-seven clergymen, famed for their piety and scholarship, to prepare a new version, and the result of their labors (first printed in 1611) is the English Bible that we use to-day, and which, in dignity and beauty of language, is among the greatest of all literary productions. It has been so generally accepted everywhere by English-speaking Protestants as *the* Bible that it is commonly called the "authorized version," though, as a matter of fact, it has never been formally *authorized* by any body of men having authority to do so. Every attempt to make any changes in this version has been fruitless. The most recent was the publication in 1881 and in 1884 of revisions of the New and Old Testaments prepared after much deliberation and with great care by eminent English and American divines, but though their work attracted great attention, and was examined with eager interest, it has failed to displace the King James version in popular affection.

The Old Testament may be divided into three general classes or divisions, one of an historical nature, one of a prophetical nature, and one containing meditations, praises, and thanksgivings. The most important of the historical books are the five written by Moses, and which taken together are called the Pentateuch (*penta* in Greek meaning five). These are the first five books of the Bible, and give an account of the creation of the world and of all things in it; describe the temptation and fall of the first man and woman; show how the Jews became God's chosen people, and tell how he dealt with them. The Pentateuch also contains the laws and commands which God laid upon the Jews. The other historical parts of this Testament narrate the triumphs and

sufferings of the chosen people, while the prophecies contain the warnings and messages which they received from on high, and foretell the coming of a Messiah or Saviour. The "sacred writings" (as the Jews named the third division) comprise their songs of sorrow and gladness, their praises and psalms, their meditations and reflections.

The books of the New Testament also are usually divided into three classes. The first comprises the four Gospels ("good tidings") with the Acts, and contains accounts of the life and teachings of Christ and the doings of his apostles. The second consists of the Epistles ("letters") of advice and admonition, which the apostles wrote to the early Christians. The third contains only the prophetical Revelation of St. John—the last book in the Bible. These divisions, of course, in neither Testament are very exact or very clearly marked or defined. They are used simply to show in a general way the character of the writings of which the Bible is composed. All parts of it (the Old and New Testaments alike) are considered by Christians as of equal weight and authority, but the Jews pay this sacred reverence only to the Old Testament.

Many editions of the Bible contain, besides the Old and New Testaments, a part called the Apocrypha. This consists of a number of books of great antiquity (all being written before the birth of Christ), which were originally thought by all Christians to be equally inspired with the rest of the Scriptures. Roman Catholics still think most of them inspired and of the same authority as other parts of the Bible; but Protestants no longer regard them as the word of God, though many recommend that they be carefully read and studied as the productions of learned and religious men, and because they make clearer some portions of the Old Testament. To distinguish the inspired books of the Bible from the Apocryphal ones, the former are called the *Canonical* books, or books containing the rules which God has given for our guidance, canon in Greek meaning *rule*. The decision as to which books were inspired (or canonical) was made by a great Council of the Christian Church which met in the year 397 A.D. at Carthage.

CHAPTER II.

THE CREATION OF THE WORLD.

In the beginning, or a very long time ago, God created the heaven and the earth. In the opening verses of the first book of the Bible we learn about the order in which all the wonderful and beautiful things which we see came from the hand of God.

Previous to the Creator's work as recorded in Genesis, death, and darkness, and an awful stillness reigned; but, when nothing else moved, "the Spirit of God moved on the face of the waters."

It was the Spirit of God that brought the *light*, the beautiful, gladdening light; and it was he that drove back the darkness. God was so pleased with the light that he gave it a name, calling it Day. The darkness he called Night.

And the evening and the morning were the first day.

God then made the *air*, or the firmament, for nothing could live, or breathe, without air. This whole globe of ours is surrounded by the air, which is also called the atmosphere.

And God divided the waters which were under the firmament from the waters which were above the firmament: and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day. And God called the dry land Earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he Seas.

After the dark and rushing waters were separated by the mighty power of God and given their place, the sky above looked calm, and clear, and beautiful; and the earth was covered with life and verdure—the springing grass, the herb, yielding seed, the fruit trees, yielding fruit of every description. And God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the third day.

And God said, Let there be lights in the firmament of the heaven, to divide the day from the night; and let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years. And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day,

and the lesser light to rule the night. He made the stars also. And God set them in the firmament of the heaven to give light upon the earth, and to rule over the night, and to divide the light from the darkness: and God saw that it was good.

And the evening and the morning were the fourth day.

After God had made the big bright Sun, that pours his rich beams of warmth over our world; and the fair and shining Moon, that moves through the blue sky, flooding her silver light over and through the darkness of the night; and the millions of stars that twinkle like diamonds away above our heads, he made the fish that swim in the sea, and all the bright birds that fly in the air, such as the eagle, the king of birds, and the sweet-singing lark and canary, the cooing dove, and the beautiful robin-redbreast.

There are many others, such as hens and chickens, partridges, pheasants, and quails. Some of these swim on the top of the water, as ducks, geese, and swans.

And God created great whales, and every living creature that moveth, which the waters brought forth abundantly after their kind, and every winged fowl after his kind: and God saw that it was good. And God blessed them, saying, Be fruitful, and multiply, and fill the waters in the seas, and let fowl multiply in the earth.

And the evening and the morning were the fifth day.

On the following day the Creator said, Let the earth bring forth the living creature after his kind, cattle, and creeping thing, and beast of the earth after his kind: and it was so."

This was the day when animals, wild and tame, were made, such as lions, tigers, bears, that prowl about in the dark forest; and the cow, the horse, the ox, and the sheep, the domestic animals.

It would have been a strange world had God stopped here and created nothing more. There would have been no head to govern, no strong hand to rule and guide the dumb creatures. So God, the All Wise and Good, as the last act but one of his creative power, made Man in his own image, in the image of God created he him, and let him have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over

the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth.

The work of this day was a double one. First the animals were made, and then God made *man*. His name was Adam, and God made him out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. And in order that he might not feel lonely, God, while he was asleep, took a rib out of his side, and made that rib into a woman, and brought her to Adam, who was charmed with the gift ; and this perfect and lovely woman became his companion.

This closed the great work of God, which took six successive days to bring to a glorious completion.

And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

The next day, which was the seventh, was the Creator's Rest Day, or Sabbath.

CHAPTER III.

THE SERPENT IN THE GARDEN.

Our first parents were very happy as long as they obeyed the commands which God gave them. But Satan was jealous of their happiness, and envious of their purity and innocence; so he came in the form of a Serpent to Eve, that he might the more readily deceive her. He told her that what God had said, namely, that Adam and she would die if they ate of the fruit which he had forbidden, was not true, but that they would become as gods, knowing good and evil, and that this was the reason why God did not want them to touch it. Eve, instead of heeding the warning which God gave her, believed what the Tempter said, and, looking at the fruit, she desired it more and more, till finally she ate of it, and persuaded her husband to do likewise.

Evil effects quickly followed. They speedily fell into sin and were afraid of God when he called them to him in the Garden. When God asked them why they had disobeyed, Adam blamed his wife, and Eve blamed the serpent, while the blame rested upon them for not obeying the command. God drove them from the Garden and kept them out by

Cherubim and flaming sword, and so they lost their beautiful home. Besides, God cursed the ground, so that it brought forth thorns and thistles instead of grain and fruit, and he told Adam that he would now have to labor hard to get a living. To the woman God promised much sorrow and bodily pain, and Adam was to rule over her instead of being the equal companion as before transgression entered.

THE TEMPTATION.

Our race now suffer because of their sin, and always will in this life; but God has, in mercy, provided a way by which we may escape all suffering in the life to come, namely, by giving his only Son to die for us on the Cross; and through whom all may be saved and brought home at last to the Heavenly Paradise.

Soon after the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden, God gave them two sons. Their names were Cain and Abel.

ADAM AND EVE DRIVEN FROM PARADISE.

Cain's occupation was a tiller of the ground, while Abel was a shepherd. Abel in worshipping brought as his offering the firstlings or earliest lambs of his flock. Cain presented the fruits of the ground. The Lord was pleased with the spirit of Abel's worship, as well as with the offering which he made. The lamb was the type of innocence and an appropriate emblem of the Lamb of God who was to come and bear away

ADAM AND EVE AFTER THE FALL.

the sin of the world. God was not pleased with the worship of Cain, and did not accept his offering. This made Cain angry, and God said to him, If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? Cain was not angry with God, but was envious of his brother because his sacrifice was accepted; and one day, when in the field, Cain rose up against Abel and slew him. This was the first murder that was committed in the world. Cain was guilty of the sins of anger, hatred,

and murder; and to these he added the sin of lying, for when God asked him where Abel, his brother, was, he said, I know not: am I my brother's keeper? But God showed Cain that he had seen him commit the crime, and told him of the punishment he should receive: that when he tilled the ground it should no more bring forth its fruit for him, and that he should be a fugitive and a vagabond on the earth.

THE SACRIFICES OF CAIN AND ABEL.

Cain told God that he was afraid men would kill him; but God set a mark upon Cain, and declared that if any man should attempt his life he should suffer vengeance. Abel's mother was deeply grieved at the loss of her son, as mothers always are, but God gave her another son named Seth to comfort her in the loss of Abel, whom Cain slew.

People became very numerous upon the earth in a very short time, because men lived so very long. A man then

lived ten times as long as men do now. They worked and traded as men have done ever since, but became remarkably wicked. There were several exceptions, no doubt, one of

THE DEATH OF ABEL.

whom was Enoch, who lived such a beautiful and holy life that it is said of him that "he walked with God." At the close of his earthly life he did not die, like other men, but was translated to heaven without dying.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FLOOD.

During the two thousand years between the Fall and the Flood those ancient men of the earth were wonderful in their

knowledge of the arts and sciences. They could play upon the harp and organ, and do a great many things that would astonish us in these days. But with all their knowledge of civilization, and their intense love of music, they were very wicked, and cared nothing for God or his ways. His Fatherly love had been lost sight of by the many thousands that peopled the earth in those far-off times. And God was angry with them, and said, My spirit shall not always strive with man. And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart were only evil continually. And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. And the Lord said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air, for it repenteth me that I have made them.

In the midst of this sad scene of sin and ruin, there was one good man named Noah (which means *rest*, or *comfort*), and on his account and through his faith, he and his wife, his three sons and their wives, were the objects of God's peculiar love and care. Like Enoch before him, Noah walked with God. His faith was strong in the reality of unseen things, and he had sweet communion and fellowship with God, and he found grace in his sight.

God was about to destroy the world with a flood, and everybody that wanted to escape drowning had an opportunity to do so by believing the message which Noah, the preacher of righteousness, told during one hundred and twenty years, while he and his carpenters were getting ready the ark or great boat in which they lived during the flood.

But during all those many years, strange to say, the only persons that believed Noah's message were his wife and their sons, and their sons' wives, eight persons in all.

When the ark was completed God told Noah to put in it two classes of animals, called clean and unclean. By the clean animals were meant those that were fit for sacrifice to God; the unclean animals were those which were unfit for sacrifice, but which were to be preserved alive on the earth.

And the Lord said unto Noah, Come thou and all thy house into the ark; for thee have I seen righteous before me in this generation. God did not say to Noah, *Go* into the ark. He speaks as if he himself were inside and wanted Noah to be with him and to enjoy his presence.

In the six hundredth year of Noah's life, in the second

ENTERING THE ARK.

month, the seventeenth day of the month, the same day were all the fountains of the great deep broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened. And the rain was upon the earth forty days and forty nights.

It must have been a sad sight to have seen drowning men, women, and children look with imploring eyes toward the ark, bitterly regretting that they refused, or would not take

the mercy that was so freely offered. But it was now too late, while they listened to one another's cry of despair.

The waters rose rapidly, filling up the valleys, covering the hills, and even the tops of the highest mountains; thus drowning or destroying all insects, birds, animals, and men. The beautiful flowers, the tall and stately trees, the delicious fruit, the green and luxuriant grass—all were swept away by the universal judgment or flood. Noah only remained alive

THE DELUGE.

and they that were with him in the ark; and the waters rolled over the earth one hundred and fifty days.

It may be that some of those who heard the warnings and the preaching of Noah, believed, and repented of their sins before the flood of judgment came, but were not with Noah in the ark because they had died while the great boat was a-building.

And God remembered Noah, and every living thing, and all

the cattle that were with him in the ark: and God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters began steadily to go down, until the ark rested on the top of the highest mountain, called Ararat.

Noah could not know of the state of the earth, and in order to find out he sent forth a raven, which did not return,

LEAVING THE ARK.

because, being a bird of prey, it probably floated on the bodies of those men and animals that had been drowned.

Soon after, Noah sent forth a dove, to see if the waters had yet gone down; but the gentle dove, finding no resting-place for the sole of her foot, returned unto the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth. Then he put forth his hand and took her into the ark. At the end of seven days Noah sent her out again, when she returned in the evening

with an olive leaf plucked off. So Noah knew that the waters were abated from off the earth. And he stayed yet other seven days, and sent forth the dove; which returned not again unto him any more.

NOAH'S SACRIFICE.

The waters continued to dry up and disappear from the earth, and Noah removed the covering from the ark, and looked, and behold, the face of the ground was dry. And God

spake unto Noah, saying, Go forth out of the ark, thou and thy wife, and thy sons, and thy sons' wives with thee. Bring forth with thee every living thing that is with thee. And Noah went forth with all his family and all that were in the ark. And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord, and took of every clean beast and of every clean fowl, and offered burnt offerings on the altar. And the Lord smelled a sweet savour, and said, I will not again curse the ground any more for man's sake; for the imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth: neither will I again smite any more everything living, as I have done. While the earth remaineth, seed-time and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease.

And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations. I do set my bow in the cloud, and I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.

We have all seen, since the days of our childhood, this beautiful rainbow, which God placed in the sky for Noah to look at.

CHAPTER V.

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

Noah's descendants increased rapidly. And they spread over a large part of the earth, and all of them spoke one language. That is, they used the same kind of speech, or words, so that what one said all the rest could understand.

In those days people lived in tents, and moved about from place to place, so that their flocks and herds might have fresh grass to feed upon. And as they went from the east to the

west they came to a large plain in the land of Shinar, and there they lived for some time. And they grew proud, and did not serve God as they ought to have done.

And they said among themselves, Let us build a city, and a

BUILDING THE TOWER OF BABEL.

tower whose top will reach unto heaven; and let us make a name for ourselves.

And they made bricks and burned them in the fire, and used these instead of stone in building the tower.

God saw their work and was not pleased with it, and he knew that if they were let alone there would be no end to the

strange things they would plan to do. So he put a stop to their work in this way: As long as they were of one mind and of one speech, they could get along very well. But when they all began to talk in their own way, and spoke strange tongues that none of the rest could understand, everything went wrong, and there was a great noise—a confusion of sound.

This, of course, brought on quarrels, and a war of words if

CONFUSION OF TONGUES.

not of blows, and those who were once the best of friends were now strangers and foes. And as they could not live together in peace, they gave up building the city, and all went off—some east, some west, some north, and some south, and made homes for themselves all over the face of the earth.

And the name of the tower is called Babel, for there God mixed up the speech of the people so that they could not talk with or understand each other.

CHAPTER VI.

ABRAM AND LOT—HAGAR AND ISHMAEL.

ABRAM was the son of Terah; his wife's name was Sarai; and they lived in Ur of the Chaldees. And the Lord told Abram to leave the land where he was born, and to go out from his father's house to a land that he would show him. And he

ABRAM SEES THE LAND OF PROMISE.

told Abram that he would take care of him, and bless him, and make him rich and great.

Abram believed in God, and did just as he told him, without stopping to ask questions. And Abram took Sarai, his wife, and Lot, his brother's son, and all the goods that they owned, and set out for the land of Canaan.

Both Abram and Lot were rich in flocks and herds, and the land did not yield enough grass to feed them. So Abram's and Lot's herdsmen fought for the best places for their cattle. And Abram said to Lot, Let us not quarrel. The world is wide enough for us both. If thou wilt take the left hand, then I will go to the right; and if thou goest to the right hand, then I will go to the left.

ABRAM RECEIVING THE PROMISE OF THE BIRTH OF A SON.

Lot looked around and saw that the plain of Jordan was like a well-watered garden, that there the grass grew rich and rank, and there would be no lack of food for his flocks and herds. But in the midst of the plain were two wicked cities—Sodom and Gomorrah—near which no one who loved God would want to live.

But Lot was on the lookout for gain, and thought a great

deal of wealth, so he chose all the plain of Jordan, and went out toward the east, and set up his tent near Sodom.

And the Lord said to Abram, after Lot had left him, Lift up now thine eyes, and look from the place where thou art northward, and southward, and eastward, and westward; for all the land which thou seest will I give to thee, and to thy heirs forever.

GOD RENEWS THE PROMISE HE MADE TO ABRAM.

Abram did not know how this could be, for he had no child, and so could have no heirs to all his great wealth.

But God told him that he should yet have a child, and that he would be no more able to count his heirs than he was to count the stars in the sky.

Now there was in Abram's tent a young girl from Egypt, named Hagar. Hagar helped Sarai with her work and waited upon her, and for awhile Sarai was good to her and treated

her kindly. But there came a time when Sarai's heart turned from Hagar, and she was so harsh with her that Hagar fled from her sight.

The angel of the Lord found her by a fountain of water, in some waste lands. And he said, Hagar, from whence didst thou come, and where wilt thou go? And she said, I flee from the face of my mistress, Sarai. The angel of the Lord said to her, Go back to thy mistress and do as she bids thee. He told her that she should have a son, and should call his name Ishmael, because the Lord had heard her voice when she cried out in her grief.

Ishmael means God shall hear. And the angel also told Hagar that her son would lead a wild out-door life, and be at war with every one, but at last he should die in the midst of his own people.

And it all came to pass just as the angel said. In a few months God gave Hagar a son, and she called his name Ishmael.

At this time Abram was fourscore and six years old. And when he was ninety-nine years of age, God spoke to him and said, Thou shalt be no more called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham, for thou shalt be the father of many nations.

And God said that Sarai should be called Sarah, for she was to be the mother of nations.

Abraham did not see how this could be, but still he believed in God, and in the angels whom he sent.

And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear a son, and thou shalt call his name Isaac. And Abraham was one hundred years of age when his son Isaac was born. And the child grew, and was a great joy to Abraham and Sarah.

Abraham made a feast for the child, and Sarah saw Ishmael, Hagar's son, making sport of Isaac, her own boy. And she told Abraham that he must send Hagar and her son out of the house, for the son of a bond-woman, or slave, should not heir with her own son, Isaac.

Abraham was grieved at this; but God told him to do as Sarah told him. So Abraham rose up early in the morning, and took bread and a bottle of water, and put it on Hagar's shoulder, and sent her and her child out of the house. And she went,

and wandered off into the wilderness or desert of Beer-sheba. The boy cried out for a drink. He was likely to die with thirst. And the bottle was empty, and there was no sign of water in the dry waste land. So Hagar laid the child under a bush, and went a good way off from him, for she could not bear to see her dear boy die. And there she wept and prayed, as only a mother can pray.

HAGAR AND ISHMAEL SENT AWAY.

And the angel of God said to her, What aileth thee, Hagar? Fear not; for God hath heard the voice of the lad. Arise, and take the lad in thine arms; for I will make him a great nation.

And as she raised her eyes she saw a well of water close by; and she went and filled the bottle, and gave the lad a drink.

And God was kind to the boy, and he grew up, and became a great archer. And he took for a wife a woman from the land of Egypt.

CHAPTER VII.

SODOM AND GOMORRAH.

Abraham dwelt on the plains of Mamre, and as he sat in the door of his tent in the heat of the day, he looked up and saw three men standing near him. Something in his heart told him that they were sent of God, and he ran out to meet them, and bowed down to the ground before them.

In the East men do not shake hands as we do, or bow when they meet a friend, but kneel down with their faces in the dust, as a sign of their great humility. This is as though they said, Great art thou, and we are as the dust of the earth.

Abraham said, My lord, if thou art pleased with me, stay here, I pray thee. Let water be brought for you to wash your feet, and rest yourselves under the tree.

This washing of the feet was another Eastern custom. In those days men did not wear such shoes as ours. They wore on their feet what was called a sandal, which was a leather sole fastened with strings, or straps, to the upper part of the foot and ankle. When they entered a house these sandals were taken off, and the feet washed by those whom they came to visit.

Abraham said also, I will fetch some bread to give you strength, and then ye may go on your way. And they said he might do so.

So Abraham hurried into the tent, and told Sarah to bake some cakes upon the hearth. Then he ran out to where the cattle were, and brought a young and tender calf, and gave it to one of his men to make it ready to cook. And when the food was all nicely prepared Abraham set it before his guests, and stood near them under the tree while they did eat.

As they rose up to go, Abraham went with them part of the way. And the Lord told Abraham that because of the wicked way in which the people in Sodom and Gomorrah lived, he meant to destroy these two great cities.

Abraham thought of Lot and his family, and asked if the good would have to suffer with the bad; and if God would not save Sodom if fifty good men could be found in it.

The Lord said he would spare the place for their sakes.

THE ANGELS' VISIT.

Abraham said, There may be five less than fifty. Wilt thou destroy all the city for lack of five good men?

The Lord said, If I find forty-five good men in it, I will spare the place.

Abraham said yet again, Perhaps there may be forty found there.

The Lord said, I will spare it for forty's sake.

Abraham said, Let not the Lord be angry when I speak, but perhaps there shall thirty be found there. And the Lord said he would spare it for thirty's sake.

LOT LEAVING SODOM.

And Abraham said, Perhaps twenty will be found there. And He said, I will spare it for twenty's sake.

And Abraham said, O let not the Lord be angry, and I will speak but this once. Perhaps ten shall be found there.

And He said, For the sake of ten good men will I spare it. And the Lord went his way, and Abraham went back to his tent.

There came two angels to Sodom, in the evening, when

Lot sat in the gate-way of that city. And when Lot saw them he rose up to meet them, and bowed down before them. And he said, Enter, I pray you, into your servant's house, and

DESTRUCTION OF THE CITIES OF THE PLAIN.

stay all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early and go on your ways.

But they said No; they would stay in the street all night.

And he urged them so strongly that they went in his house, and he brought them food to eat. And they told Lot to take all he had out of Sodom, for they had come to destroy that

city. So Lot made haste to warn his family, and to get them to a safe place.

And he said to his sons-in-law, Up, get you out of this place, for the Lord will destroy the city. But his sons-in-law laughed with scorn at his fears.

In the morning the angels urged Lot to hurry and take his wife and two daughters out of the city, lest they should be destroyed. And as Lot did not move fast enough, the men took him and his wife and his two daughters by the hand, and brought them outside the city. And they said, Flee for thy life; look not behind thee, nor stay thou in all the plain. Flee to the mountains, lest thou be burnt up in the flames.

But Lot said to them, Oh! not so, my lord, but since thou hast been so merciful as to save my life, bid me not go to the mountains, lest something evil happen to me, and I die! There is a little city near at hand. Oh! let me escape to that, and my soul shall live.

And the angel said to him, Haste then to that place, for I can do nothing till thou art there. Therefore the name of the city was called Zoar: which means Little.

The sun was well on its way when Lot entered the city of Zoar. Then the Lord rained fire and brimstone out of heaven on Sodom and Gomorrah, and destroyed those cities, and all the plain, and all the people, and everything that grew out of the ground.

And Lot's wife—who was sorry to leave the city of Sodom—looked back, and she immediately became a pillar of salt. And Lot went up out of Zoar, and dwelt in the mountains, and took his two daughters with him, for he was afraid to live in Zoar.

Abraham got up early in the morning, and went out to the place where he had stood before the Lord. And he looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah, and toward all the land of the plain, and lo, the smoke from the country went up as the smoke of a furnace.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.

CHAPTER VIII.

ABRAHAM AND ISAAC.

ABRAHAM was a man of great wealth. God had been good to him all his life, and his heart was full of praise and gratitude. But there came a time when God wanted to try Abraham's faith, and see how he would bear up under losses and trials.

So God spoke to him one day, and said, Abraham! And Abraham said, Here I am.

And God said, Take now thy son, thy only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and go into the land of Moriah, and offer him as a burnt offering upon one of the mountains which I will tell thee of.

And Abraham rose up early in the morning, and saddled his ass, and took two of his young men with him, and Isaac his son, and cut the wood for the burnt offering, and set out for the place of which God had told him.

On the third day Abraham lifted up his eyes and saw the place afar off. And he said to his young men, Stay ye here with the ass; and I and my son will go yonder and worship, and then come back to you.

And Abraham took the wood and laid it on Isaac's back; and he took the fire in his hand, and a knife, and they went both of them together.

And Isaac spoke unto Abraham, and said, My father. And he said, Here am I, my son. And Isaac said, Here is the fire and the wood, but where is the lamb for a burnt offering?

And Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering.

When they came to the place which God had told them of, Abraham built an altar there, and laid the wood in order, and bound Isaac his son, and laid him on the altar on top of the wood.

And Abraham stretched out his hand and took up the knife to slay his son.

And the angel of the Lord called to him out of heaven, and said, Abraham, Abraham. And he said, Here am I.

And the angel said, Lay not thy hand on the lad, and do him no harm, for now I know that thou dost love God, seeing thou hast not withheld thy son, thine only son, from me.

And Abraham lifted up his eyes, and saw behind him a ram caught in the thicket by his horns. And Abraham went and

"LAY NOT THY HAND ON THE LAD."

took the ram, and offered him for a burnt offering instead of his son.

And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-jireh, which means, The Lord will provide.

And the angel of the Lord called to Abraham the second time, and told him that because he had done this thing, and been willing to give up his only son, the Lord would bless him and all those who should come after him.

So Abraham went back to the place where he had left his young men, and they all went together to Beer-sheba, where Abraham dwelt at that time.

Sarah died at Hebron, in the land of Canaan, and Abraham came to mourn and weep for her. And, as he stood by his dead, he spoke to the sons of Heth and said, I am a stranger and a pilgrim in your midst; let me have a burying-place here, that I may bury my dead out of my sight.

The children of Heth said to Abraham, Thou art a mighty prince among us. Choose any sepulchre thou wilt, and bury thy dead there, and none of us will hinder thee.

Abraham stood up, and then bowed low to the people of the land, and said that if Ephron would sell him the cave of Machpelah, which was at the end of his field, he would pay him what he thought it was worth, and bury his dead there.

But Ephron spoke so that all might hear him, and said, The field I give thee, and the cave therein I give to thee, in the presence of the sons of my people. Go, bury thy dead. Abraham bowed again, and said, If thou wilt let me have it, I will buy it of thee. For he would not take it as a gift.

Then Ephron told what the land was worth; but still he did not wish to take money for it. But Abraham had the silver weighed out and paid over to Ephron. And the field, and the cave which was therein, and all the trees that were in the field, and in the borders round about, were made over unto Abraham, for him and his heirs to own forever.

And after this was done, Abraham buried Sarah his wife in the cave of Machpelah.

CHAPTER IX.

ISAAC AND REBEKAH

Isaac was nearly forty years old when his mother died. He grieved for her loss, for she had been a good mother to him, and he was very fond of her. Abraham was now an old

man, and felt that he had not much longer to live. So he called the eldest servant of the house to him, the one who took care of all that he had, and told him to go to Syria where he used to dwell, and get a wife for Isaac. For he must not wed one of the Canaanites.

The servant said to him, Perhaps the woman will not be willing to follow me to this land. Must I needs take thy son with me to the land from whence thou camest?

Abraham said, Take not my son to that land, lest thou bring him not back with thee. The Lord shall send his angel before thee, and thou shall find a wife for my son. And if the woman is not willing to follow thee, then it will be no fault of thine, and I will not hold thee to thy oath.

So the servant took ten of his master's camels, and went to Mesopotamia and to the city where Nahor—Abraham's brother—lived.

The wells were outside of the city's walls, and in the cool of the evening the women went out with their pitchers—which were like jars, and made of skins—and filled them with fresh water for the use of the household.

Abraham's servant made his camels kneel down outside the city by one of the wells, near the time that the women would come out to draw water. And he said, O Lord God, I pray thee send me good speed this day, and show kindness to my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well, and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water. And I will say to one of the damsels, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink. And if she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also, then shall I know that thou hast chosen her to be the wife of Isaac, and hast showed kindness to my master.

And ere he had done speaking, Rebekah, the daughter of Bethuel, who was the son of Nahor, came out of the city with her pitcher on her shoulder.

She was young and beautiful, and she went down to the well and filled her pitcher, and came up again. And the servant ran to meet her, and said, Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water from thy pitcher.

And she said, Drink, my lord. And she made haste and

let down her pitcher on her hand and gave him drink. And when she had done this she said, I will draw water for thy camels also, till they have done drinking. And she made haste and emptied her pitcher into the trough, and ran again

REBEKAH AT THE WELL.

to the well to draw water, and drew up enough for all his camels.

And the man was dumb with surprise, and knew not what to think. So when the camels had left off drinking, the servant took a gold earring and two gold bracelets, and gave

ISAAC AND REBEKAH.

them to the kind-hearted girl. And he said, Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee. Is there room in thy father's house for us to lodge in?

She said to him, I am the daughter of Bethuel the son of Milcah, Nahor's wife. We have both straw and food enough, and room to lodge in. And the man bowed his head, and praised the Lord, who had been wit' him on his way, and led him to the right house.

And the damsel ran and told her mother all that had taken place.

Now Rebekah had a brother, and his name was Laban; and when he saw the earring, and the bracelets on his sister's hands, and heard her tell how the man came to her and what he said, he ran out of the house, and found the man standing by his camels at the well.

And he said to the man, Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; why standest thou without? for there is room for thee and the camels.

And the man came into the house, and food was set before him. But he said, I will not eat until I have told my errand. And Laban said, Speak on.

Then the man said he was Abraham's servant, and told why he had been sent, and all that had taken place at the well.

And now, said he, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may know which way to turn.

Then Laban and Bethuel answered, This thing is from the Lord, and we cannot speak unto thee good or ill. Here is Rebekah; take her, and let her be the wife of thy master's son, as the Lord hath spoken.

And when Abraham's servant heard these words, he praised the Lord by bowing himself to the earth. And the servant gave rich gifts to Rebekah, and also made presents to her mother and brother. And they did eat and drink—he, and the men that were with him—and stayed there all night. The next morning they rose up, and the servant said, Send me away to my master.

But Rebekah's brother and mother said, Let the damsel

abide with us a few days, at the least ten ; and then she shall go with you.

And he said to them, Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath brought this thing about; but send me away that I may go to my master.

And they said, We will call the damsel, and let her speak for herself.

REBEKAH JOURNEYING TO ISAAC.

And they called Rebekah, and said unto her, Wilt thou go with this man? And she said, I will go.

And Rebekah and her maids rode on the camels, and followed after the servant, who led the way.

One evening, Isaac went out in the field to think, and perhaps to pray And as he raised his eyes, he saw that the camels were on their way home.

When Rebekah saw Isaac, she said to the servant, What man is this that walketh out to meet us? And the servant said, It is my master.

So Rebekah got down from the camel, and covered her face with a veil; for it was the custom in those days for young women to wear veils when they went out to meet the bridegroom. And the man did not see the face of his wife until after he was married to her.

The servant told Isaac all that he had done; and Isaac brought Rebekah into the tent that had been his mother's, and she became his wife, and he loved her very dearly.

CHAPTER X.

JACOB AND ESAU.

Isaac was quite an old man before he had any children. Then God gave him two boys—twins—and he and Rebekah were very happy over this. The two boys were quite unlike each other, and not at all like brothers. One of them had a thick coat of red hair all over his body; so they named him Esau, which means Red. The other child had a smooth skin, but was strong and active, so they called him Jacob.

The lads grew up to manhood, and Esau became a great hunter, and spent most of his time out-of-doors, while Jacob was a more quiet man, and fond of home life.

And Isaac loved Esau because he brought venison for him to eat. But Rebekah loved Jacob.

One day when Jacob was putting away some pottage or stew, made of meat and vegetables, Esau came in from the field, and he was very hungry. And Esau said to Jacob, Feed me, I pray thee, with some of that red pottage, for I am faint.

And Jacob said, Sell me this day thy birthright.

Now Esau was the first-born, and it was his right to heir his father's property, and to take his place when he died. He should have looked on this as a sacred trust, and not have given up his place so easily. But he was too hungry to care

much for houses and lands, and silver and gold. And he said to Jacob, I am at the point of death, and what good will a birthright do me?

So he sold his birthright to Jacob for a mess of pottage, and did eat and drink, and then went on his way.

ISAAC SPEAKING TO ESAU.

When Isaac was so old that his eyes were dim, and he could not see, he called Esau to him and said: I am an old man, and I know not how soon I may die. Take then, I pray thee, thy quiver and thy bow, and go out into the field, and get me some venison. And make me a nice dish of it, such as I love,

and bring it to me, that I may eat, and bless thee before I die.

And Rebekah heard when Isaac spoke to Esau his son; and Esau went to the field to hunt for venison. And Rebekah told Jacob, word for word, what Isaac had said to Esau. And she said, Now, my son, obey my voice, and do as I command you. Go to the flock, and bring me two good kids from the goats, and I will season the meat well, and make such a dish as will please thy father. And thou shalt bring it to thy father, that he may eat, and bless thee before he dies.

Jacob said to Rebekah his mother, But my brother Esau is a hairy man, and I am a smooth man. Perhaps my father will feel of me, and I shall seem to him as a deceiver, and I shall bring a curse upon myself, and not a blessing.

His mother said, Upon me be thy curse, my son. Only do as I bid thee, and go fetch the young kids. And he went, and brought them to his mother, and she made of them such a dish as his father loved.

And Rebekah took the best clothes of her eldest son Esau, which were in the house, and put them on Jacob her younger son. And she put the skins of the kids on his hands, and on the smooth part of his neck. And she gave the meat and the bread into the hand of her son Jacob. And he came near to Isaac, and said, My father. And Isaac said, Here am I; who art thou, my son?

Jacob said, I am Esau, thy first-born; I have done as thou didst bid me. Rise, I pray thee, and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me.

Isaac said, How is it thou hast found it so quickly, my son? And he said, Because the Lord led the way. And Isaac said to Jacob, Come near, I pray thee, that I may feel thee, my son, whether thou be my son Esau, or not. And Jacob went near to Isaac his father; and he felt him, and said, The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau. And as he could not see, he blessed him, thinking he was Esau.

And he said, Art thou my very son Esau? And he said, I am.

And Isaac ate of the venison, and drank of the wine that Jacob brought. And he said, Come near now, and kiss me,

my son. And Jacob came near, and kissed him; and he smelled the smell of his clothes and blessed him, and said, The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed. And he told his son that God would take care of him, and give him great wealth, and make him a ruler over many nations.

Jacob had scarce left the presence of Isaac his father, when Esau his brother came in from the hunt. And he also cooked

ISAAC BLESSING JACOB.

some meat and brought it to his father, and said, Rise now, and eat of thy son's venison, that thy soul may bless me.

And Isaac said to him, Who art thou? And he said, I am thy first-born, Esau. And Isaac trembled greatly, and said, Who, and where is he that hath taken venison, and brought it to me, and I have eaten before thou camest, and have blessed him? Yea, and he shall be blessed.

And when Esau heard the words of his father, he cried out with a great and exceeding bitter cry, Bless me, even me also, O my father. And he said, Thy brother came, and by fraud hath taken away thy blessing.

And he said, Is he not rightly named Jacob? for he hath twice supplanted me. He took away my birthright; and now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?

Isaac said to Esau, Behold, I have made him thy lord, and all his brethren have I given to him for servants, and have made him rich and great; and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?

Esau said, Hast thou but one blessing, my father? bless me, even me also, O my father! And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

And Isaac, pierced to the heart, said unto him, By thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt rule in the land, that thou shalt break his yoke from off thy neck.

Esau, more ready to blame others than himself, hated Jacob because of the blessing his father had given him; and he planned to kill his brother, as soon as his father was laid in the grave. He thought that Isaac's death was near at hand, but the old man lived many years longer; and in the meantime this threat of Esau's came to the ears of Rebekah.

She sent for Jacob, and told him that Esau meant to kill him, and bade him go to Haran, where Laban, her brother, dwelt, and stay with him till Esau's anger was turned away. When he has forgotten what thou hast done to him, she said, I will send and fetch thee from thence. Why should I lose both of you in one day?

And Rebekah made an excuse to Isaac for sending her favorite son away. She was not pleased with Esau's wives, nor did she wish her son Jacob to take a wife from the daughters of Heth. So she told Isaac so, and Isaac sent Jacob to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel, his mother's father, and bade him take a wife from among the daughters of Laban, the brother of Rebekah.

And Jacob went out from Beer-sheba, and took his way toward Haran.

CHAPTER XI.

JACOB'S DREAM—JACOB AND RACHEL.

Jacob set out from Beer-sheba all alone. It was not usual in those days to do this, as there was danger of meeting wild beasts or wicked men. But Jacob stole out in this quiet way

JACOB'S DREAM.

from his home, because he was afraid of his own brother Esau; and he wished to make no show or parade to excite Esau's feelings, and make him more angry and jealous.

And he went on toward Haran; and when he came to a certain place, at sunset, he stayed there all night. He took a stone and placed it so that it would do for pillows, and then laid down to sleep, for he was very tired.

And as he slept he dreamed. And in his dream he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, and the angels of God ascending and descending on it.

And behold, the Lord stood above it, and said that he would do great things for him. And He said, Behold, I am with thee, and will bring thee again to this land; for I will not leave thee until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of.

And Jacob woke out of his sleep, and said, Surely the Lord is in this place; and I knew it not. And he was afraid, and said, How dreadful is this place! This is none other than the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven.

And Jacob rose up early in the morning, and took the stone that he had put for his pillow, and set it up on one end for a pillar, to mark the place, so that he would know it when he came back from his errand. And he poured oil on top of the pillar, as a token of praise to God. And he called the name of that place BETH-EL: that is, The House of God.

And Jacob vowed a vow—or, as we say, he took an oath—and said, If God will be with me, and will keep me in this way that I go, and will give me food and clothes, so that I come back to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God. And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house; and of all that Thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto Thee.

Then Jacob went on his journey, and came to the land of the children of the east. And he looked, and saw a well in a field; and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks. And a great stone was on the mouth of the well.

And there were all the flocks gathered. And the shepherds rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the sheep, and then put the stone back in its place again.

Jacob drew near and asked them whence they came. We are from Haran, they said. Do you know Laban, the son of

Nahor? inquired Jacob. And they said, We know him. Jacob said to them, Is he well? They said, He is well; and behold, Rachel his daughter cometh this way with her sheep.

And he told the men to make haste and water the sheep,

RACHEL AND JACOB AT THE WELL.

and then go and feed them. But they said they could not do this; that they must wait until all the flocks were gathered there; then the stone would be rolled from the mouth of the well, and they could water the sheep. This was so there would be no waste of the precious water.

And while he yet spake with them, Rachel came up with her father's sheep, for she took care of them. And when Jacob saw Rachel, he drew near, and rolled the stone from the mouth of the well, and watered the flock of Laban, his mother's brother.

And Jacob kissed Rachel and wept for joy. And he told her that her father was his uncle, and that he was Rebekah's son. And Rachel ran and told her father.

When Laban heard that Jacob, his sister's son, was near, he ran to meet him, and threw his arms around his neck, and kissed him, and brought him to his house. And Jacob told Laban what he had come for.

Laban said to him, Surely thou art my bone and my flesh; and Jacob stayed with him for the space of a month. Then Laban said to Jacob, Because thou art related to me, shouldst thou work for me for nothing? Tell me what shall thy wages be?

Laban had two daughters: the name of the elder was Leah, and the name of the younger was Rachel. Leah was tender-eyed, but Rachel was beautiful and well-formed. And Jacob loved Rachel. So when Laban asked what wages he would take, he said, I will serve thee seven years for Rachel, thy younger daughter.

Laban said, It is better that I give her to thee, than that I should give her to another man. So stay with me. And Jacob served seven years for Rachel, and they seemed to him but a few days, so great was his love for her.

And Jacob said to Laban, Give me my wife, for the time is up that I said I would serve thee. And Laban gathered together all the men of the place and made a feast. And in the evening he brought in Leah, closely veiled, so that her face could not be seen, and Jacob took her for his wife.

In the morning Jacob saw that it was Leah whom he had wed; and he went at once to Laban, and said, What is this thou hast done to me? did I not serve with thee for Rachel? Why hast thou played me such a trick?

Laban said, It is not the custom of our country to give the younger before the first-born. Be true to Leah, and thou shalt have Rachel also, if thou wilt serve me for another seven years.

And Jacob did so, and Laban gave him his daughter Rachel for a wife, for there was no law in those days to prevent a man from having more than one wife. And Jacob loved Rachel far more than he did Leah, and stayed with Laban even another seven years on her account.

God gave children to Leah; but Rachel had no children, and her heart was sad, and she was very jealous of her sister.

JACOB RETURNING TO CANAAN.

But at last God heard her prayer, and gave Rachel a son. And she called his name Joseph.

By this time Jacob had become a rich man, and had flocks and herds of his own. And Laban's sons spoke ill of Jacob; and Laban was not the good friend to him that he had been. And God told Jacob to go back to his own country.

So Jacob put his wives and his sons on camels, and took all

the flocks and herds, and everything that he owned, and left Laban, and went back to the home of Isaac, his father.

And on the way a company of angels met him. And when Jacob saw them he said, This is God's host. And he called the name of that place Mahanaim; which means Two hosts, or camps.

Jacob was still afraid of his brother Esau, and had sent messengers to speak with him, and to offer him rich gifts if he would be at peace with him. The messengers brought word that Esau was on his way to meet Jacob with four hundred men. Jacob was in great fear, and prayed to God to save him from the hands of his brother who hated him so. He said, I am not worthy the least of thy mercies, and of all the kind care thou hast given me. But save me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I fear him, lest he will come and smite me.

One night Jacob was left alone, and there came an angel, who wrestled with him till the break of day. And when the angel saw that he could not throw Jacob, he touched the hollow of his thigh and put it out of joint.

And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And Jacob said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And the angel said to him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob.

The angel said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince thou hast power with God and with men. The word Israel means, A prince of God.

And Jacob said to the angel, who was in the form of a man, Tell me, I pray thee, thy name. And he said, Why dost thou need to ask my name? And he blessed him then and there. And Jacob called the name of the place Peni-el: for I have seen God face to face, and my life is saved. The word Peni-el means, The face of God.

When Jacob raised his eyes, he saw Esau coming with his four hundred men. And he went out in front of his wives and children, and bowed down to the ground seven times on his way to his brother.

And Esau ran to meet him, and fell on his neck and kissed him; and they both wept together, and all the past was forgiven.

Then Esau raised his eves, and saw the women and children, and said, Who are those with thee? And Jacob said, The children which God hath given thy servant. And they all bowed down before Esau. Then Esau said, What mean-

THE MEETING OF JACOB AND ESAU.

est thou by all this drove which I met? Jacob told him they were sent as a present to him.

Esau said, I have enough, my brother; keep what is thine own.

And Jacob said, Nay, I pray thee, if now I have found grace in thy sight (that is, if thou art good friends with me), then take the present I bring. For to have seen thy face, and to know thou art pleased with me, is as if I had seen the face of God. He said God had been good to him, and he had enough and to spare, and he urged Esau so strongly to take his gifts, that Esau did so. And Esau went back to Seir, where he lived; and Jacob went on his way. And God told him to go up to Beth-el and dwell there for a while, and build there an altar to the God who came to him when he fled from his brother Esau.

Now Rachel when she left her father's house stole some of the images that she had been wont to worship. And when God told Jacob to go up to Beth-el he said to his household, and to all that were with him, Put away the strange gods that are among you, and let us go up to Beth-el, and I will make there an altar unto God, who helped me when I was in distress, and took care of me on my journey. And they took their earrings from their ears, and gave them and the idols to Jacob, and he buried them in the ground under an oak tree which was near Shechem. And they came to Beth-el, and Jacob built an altar there and gave praise to God.

As they went from Beth-el, they came near to a place called Ephrath—where Bethlehem now is. And there God gave Jacob and Rachel another son. And his father called him Benjamin.

And Rachel died, and was buried on the way to Bethlehem. And Jacob set up a stone on her grave, to mark the spot where she lay.

Jacob came back to Hebron, to the land where Isaac his father dwelt, and made his home there.

And Isaac lived to be one hundred and eighty years old, and then he died, and Jacob and Esau buried him.

CHAPTER XI.

JOSEPH AND HIS BRETHREN.

Now the sons of Jacob were twelve, but he loved Joseph better than all the rest because he was the child of his old age. And he made him a coat of many colors. And when his brothers saw that their father loved Joseph more than all his other children, they hated the boy, and could not speak peaceably unto him.

SHECHEM, THE FIRST CAPITAL OF THE KINGDOM OF ISRAEL.

Though but a lad, he went out with his elder brothers to help them feed their flocks, and he brought back word to his father of all their evil deeds and the harsh way in which he was treated by them.

And Joseph dreamed a dream : and he told it to his brethren, and they hated him the more. And he said to them Hear, I pray you, this dream which I have dreamed. For behold we were binding sheaves in the field, and lo, my shea/

arose and stood upright; and behold your sheaves stood round about, and made obeisance to my sheaf.

And his brethren said to him, Shalt thou indeed reign over

JOSEPH'S DREAM.

us? And they hated him yet the more for his dreams, and for his words.

And he dreamed yet another dream, and told it to his brethren, and said, Behold, I have dreamed another dream;

and behold the sun and the moon and eleven stars bowed down to me.

And he told it to his father, and to his brethren; and his father rebuked him, and said to him, What is this dream thou hast dreamed? Shall I and thy mother and thy brethren indeed come to bow down ourselves to thee, to the earth? And his brethren envied him; but his father took note of these things.

Now his brethren went to feed their father's flock in Shechem—forty miles north of Hebron—where Jacob had bought a piece of land.

And Israel said to Joseph, Do not thy brethren feed the flock in Shechem? Come, and I will send thee unto them. And he said, Here am I.

And he said to him, Go, I pray thee, and see if it be well with thy brethren, and well with the flocks; and bring me back word. So he sent him out of the vale of Hebron, and he came to Shechem.

And a certain man found him wandering in the field, and said to him, What seekest thou? And he said, I seek my brethren: tell me, I pray thee, where they feed their flocks.

And the man said, They have left this place; for I heard them say, Let us go to Dothan. And Joseph went after his brethren, and found them at Dothan, which was eight miles further on.

And when they saw him afar off, even before he came near to them, they began to plan in what way they should take his life.

And they said one to another, Behold, this dreamer cometh. Come now, therefore, and let us slay him, and cast him into some pit: and we will say, Some evil beast hath devoured him: and we shall see what will become of his dreams.

Reuben was Jacob's eldest son, and when he heard what his brothers said, he felt that he must save the boy in some way, for it would not do to kill him.

So he said to them, Shed no blood, but cast him into this pit that is in the wilderness, and lay no hand upon him. Reuben thought if they would do this that he would watch his chance and get Joseph out of the pit, and send him back safely to his father.

As soon as Joseph came where his brethren were they stripped off his coat of many colors, and threw him into a pit: and the pit was empty, there was no water in it.

These pits were old wells that had dried up, and were left on the fields as traps for wild beasts. If a lion, or tiger, fell into one of these pits there was no chance for it to get out, and it would soon starve to death, and be the prey of wolves and jackals. Well the cruel brothers knew what would be Joseph's fate if left in the pit over night. Yet they sat down to eat and drink, and to be merry at his expense.

And as they lifted their eyes they saw a company of Ishmaelites coming from Gilead, with their camels laden with spices, balm, and myrrh, which they were taking to Egypt to sell.

And Judah said to his brethren, What profit will it be to us if we kill our brother, and hide his blood? Let us rather sell him to the Ishmaelites, and let not our hand be upon him; for he is our brother, and our flesh. And they agreed to do this.

Then there came along some Midianite merchants, and the wicked brothers drew Joseph out of the pit, and sold him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver. And they brought Joseph into Egypt. And when Reuben went to the pit behold Joseph was not there; and he tore his clothes, so great was his grief. And he went back to his brethren, not knowing what they had done, and cried out, The child is not; and I, whither shall I go? for he knew that his father would expect him to watch over Joseph, and that it would break the old man's heart to have any harm come to his dear boy.

The wicked brothers, having got rid of Joseph, knew that they would have to make some excuse to their father for his absence. So they killed one of the young kids, and took Joseph's coat and dipped it in the blood. And they brought the coat home to their father, and said, This have we found. Is it thy son's coat?

And Jacob knew it, and said, It is my son's coat. An evil beast hath devoured him. Joseph is without doubt torn in pieces.

And Jacob tore his clothes, and put sackcloth around his

loins—that is, around his waist—and mourned for his son many days. To tear the clothes, to wear sackcloth, and to put ashes on the head, were in olden times the signs of great sorrow or great shame. This was the penance men did for their sins, which they thought was the cause of all their woes.

JOSEPH SOLD BY HIS BROTHERS.

Jacob refused to be comforted for the loss of Joseph, and said, I will go down into the grave and unto my son, mourning. Thus his father wept for him.

The Midianites took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to

Potiphar, an officer of King Pharaoh, and a captain of the guard—that is, chief executioner. And God took care of Joseph, and he was given a place in Potiphar's house. And so well did he serve his master, that Potiphar made him overseer over his house, and placed all his goods in his care.

JOSEPH'S COAT.

And from the time Joseph was made overseer in his house, the Lord blessed the Egyptian for Joseph's sake, and everything went well with him. So Joseph became a great favorite with his master, and he grew up to be a handsome man, with the look of Rachel, his mother.

But Potiphar's wife spoke ill of Joseph, and told her husband things that were not true. So Potiphar turned Joseph out of his house and had him shut up in prison. At first he was treated very harshly, but the keeper of the prison took a fancy to Joseph, who made himself so useful that he soon had charge of all the prisoners. Among them were the chief butler and the chief baker of the King of Egypt. They had done something to offend Pharaoh, and he sent them to Potiphar, who had them thrust into the prison where Joseph was. And Joseph waited on them, and spoke kindly to them.

One night the butler and the baker had each a strange dream. And when Joseph went into their ward in the morning he found them looking very sad. And he asked them the cause of their sadness. They said to him, We have dreamed a dream, and there is no one to tell us the meaning of it.

Joseph said to them, Tell me your dreams, I pray you.

And the chief butler told his dream to Joseph. He said, I saw a vine, and in the vine were three branches with buds on them; and blossoms shot forth, and the clusters brought forth ripe grapes. And Pharaoh's cup was in my hand, and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into the king's hand.

Joseph said to him, This is the meaning of your dream: The three branches are three days; and within three days shall Pharaoh put thee back in thy place, and thou shalt hand the king his cup and be his chief butler again. But think of me when it shall be well with thee, and show kindness, I pray thee, unto me, and make mention of me to Pharaoh and bring me out of this house. For I was stolen away out of the land of the Hebrews, and have done nothing that they should put me in a dungeon.

Then the chief baker told his dream to Joseph. He said, In my dream I had three white baskets on my head. And in the uppermost basket were all manner of baked meats for Pharaoh; and the birds did eat them out of the basket on my head.

Joseph said to him, The meaning of your dream is this: The three baskets are three days. And within three days shall Pharaoh hang thee on a tree, and the birds shall eat off thy flesh.

And on the third day, which was Pharaoh's birthday, he made a feast to all his servants. And he put the chief butler back in his place, and he was cup-bearer to the king once more. But he hanged the chief baker, as Joseph had said he would. Yet the chief butler did not remember Joseph, nor mention his name to the king. So Joseph still remained in the prison.

PHARAOH'S DREAM.

At the end of two years Pharaoh had a strange dream. He dreamed that he stood by the river Nile, and there came up out of the river seven sleek fat cows, and they went and fed in a meadow that was near.

And behold, seven other cows, lean and ugly, came up after them out of the Nile, and stood by the fat cows on the brink of the river. And the lean cows ate up the fat cows. And then Pharaoh awoke.

Then he fell asleep again and had another dream. And behold, seven ears of corn came up on one stalk, plump and good. And seven thin ears that had been blasted by the east wind sprang up after them. And the seven thin ears ate up the seven round full ears. And Pharaoh awoke, and behold it was a dream!

The king was greatly troubled, and he sent for all the magi-

JOSEPH EXPLAINING PHARAOH'S DREAM.

cians and wise men of Egypt, and told them his dream; and not one of them could tell the king what it meant. If they guessed the meaning they were too much afraid of the king to tell him the truth.

Then the chief butler thought of Joseph, and told the king all about him, and where he could be found. And Pharaoh sent at once for Joseph. And they hurried him out of the

prison, and when he had shaved himself and changed his clothes, he was taken before the king.

Pharaoh said to Joseph, I have dreamed a dream, and there is none that can explain it. I am told that when thou hearest a dream thou canst tell what it means.

Joseph said, It is not in me except God shall give me the power.

THE ELEVATION OF JOSEPH.

Then Pharaoh told his dream to Joseph just as he had dreamed it. And Joseph said, God hath showed Pharaoh what he is about to do. The seven good cows are seven years, and the seven good ears are seven years. The dream is one. And the seven thin cows, and the seven empty ears blasted by the east wind, mean seven years of famine.

There will come seven years of great plenty throughout all the land of Egypt. And after them there will be seven years

of a great famine, when food will be so scarce in the land that many will starve to death. And as Pharaoh dreamed the same dream twice, it was a sign that God would shortly bring it to pass.

Then Joseph told Pharaoh to choose a wise man, and one who had good judgment, and set him over the land of Egypt. And let him send out overseers all over the land, to lay out one-fifth part of it, and so raise corn during all the seven years of plenty. And let them gather all the food of those good years, and lay up corn where Pharaoh can have charge of it, and let them keep food in the cities. And that food shall be stored away for use during the seven years of famine which shall be in the land of Egypt, so that the people shall not starve to death.

Pharaoh thought the plan a good one, and he said to Joseph, Since God hath shown thee all this, there is none so wise and careful as thou art. And he made him chief ruler in the land.

And Pharaoh took off the ring from his own hand and put it on Joseph's hand, and had him richly dressed, and put a gold chain around his neck. And Joseph drove out in a chariot, and the people bowed down to him as if he had been a great prince.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE FAMINE IN EGYPT.

Joseph married, and dwelt in Egypt, and during the seven years of plenty he laid up great stores of corn. Then came the seven years of famine, which he had foretold, and there was a great dearth in all the lands round about. And when the starving people cried to Pharaoh for bread he said to them, Go to Joseph, and do as he tells you.

The famine grew worse and worse and spread so that people from all countries came into Egypt to buy corn of Joseph.

When Jacob heard there was corn to be had in Egypt, he

told his sons to go down there and buy some, that they might have food enough to keep them alive. So Joseph's ten brothers went down to buy corn in Egypt. Benjamin did not go, for Jacob was afraid something would happen to him.

When the sons of Israel came where Joseph was, they bowed down before him, and did not know that he was their brother, the one they had thrown into the pit, and then sold as a slave.

Joseph spoke roughly to them and said, Whence come ye? And they said, From the land of Canaan to buy food.

Joseph knew them, but they did not know him, and he remembered the dreams that he had dreamed of them, and said to them, Ye are spies, and have come to see the poor state of the land. They told him they had not, and said, We are twelve brothers, the sons of one man in the land of Canaan. The youngest son is at home with our father, and one is dead.

Joseph said, To prove that you are telling me the truth, send one of you back to bring your brother, or ye shall be kept in prison as spies. And they were all thrust in prison for three days.

Then Joseph said to them, If ye be true men let one of you remain bound in prison while the rest go and carry corn to keep your families from starving. But bring your youngest brother to me, to prove your words true, and ye shall not die. And the choice fell on Simeon, and he was bound before their eyes.

Then Joseph told his servants to fill his brothers' sacks with corn, and to put back in each sack the money that had been paid, and also to furnish them with food to eat on the way.

Then Jacob's sons loaded their asses with the corn, and set out for Canaan. And they came to an inn, and as one of them opened his sack to give food to his ass he spied the money that was in the mouth of the sack. And he told his brethren, and they were in great fear, and said to each other, What is this that God hath done to us? And when they came to Jacob in the land of Canaan they told him of everything that had taken place, why Simeon was not with them

and how they were to prove that they were good and true men.

And when they emptied their sacks, behold every man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when they and their father saw this they were afraid.

And Jacob said, Ye have robbed me of my children. Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and now ye will take Benjamin away. All these things are against me.

Reuben spoke up and said, Kill my two sons if I bring him not back to thee. Give him into my care, and I will surely bring him back again. But Jacob said, My son shall not go down with you, for if anything should happen to him on the way it would bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave.

When they had eaten up the corn which they had brought out of Egypt, their father said to them, Go to Egypt again and buy us a little food. Judah said, If thou wilt send Benjamin with us then we will go down and buy thee food. But if thou wilt not send him we will not go down; for the man said to us, Ye shall not see my face, except your brother be with you.

Jacob said, Why did you do me such an ill turn as to tell the man that you had a brother? They said, The man asked us all about ourselves, if our father was alive, and if we had another brother; and how did we know that he would say, Bring your brother down?

Then Judah said to his father, Send the lad with me, and we will arise and go. If I bring him not back to thee, let me bear the blame.

So Jacob let them go, and told them to take some of the fruits of the land with them, and some balm, honey, spices, myrrh, nuts, and almonds, as a present to the ruler. Take also your brother, he said, and may God give you mercy before the man that he may send back both Simeon and Benjamin.

And he told them to take a double amount of money with them; as the money they had found in the mouth of their sacks might have been put there by mistake.

So the men took the present, and a double amount of money,

and Benjamin, and went down to Egypt and stood before Joseph.

And when Joseph saw Benjamin with them, he had them taken to his own house to dine with him. And they were afraid, and thought they were to be put in prison for stealing the money. And on the way they spoke to the steward of Joseph's house, and he told them to have no fear, it was all right. And when Joseph came in they bowed low to him, and gave him the present they had brought. He spoke kindly to them, and said, Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake? Is he yet alive?

They said he was in good health, and bowed down their heads as to one of high rank. And when he saw Benjamin, his mother's son, he said, Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake to me? And he said, God be good to thee, my son. And Joseph left the room in haste that he might give way to his tears.

Then he told the steward to fill the men's sacks with corn, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in the mouth of the sack. And put my silver cup, he said, in the sack of the youngest with his corn-money. And all this was done. And as soon as it was daylight the men set out on their asses to return to Canaan. And when they were a short distance from the city, Joseph sent a man after them, to ask them why they had done evil in return for good, and to charge them with having stolen his lord's drinking-cup.

When the man came up to them he put these words to them. And they said, Why saith my lord these words? God forbid that thy servants should do this thing. The money we found in our sacks we brought back from Canaan, so why should we steal silver or gold out of thy lord's house? Let him die in whose sack the cup is found, and the rest of us will be thy slaves. The man said, He with whom it is found shall be my servant, and the rest of you shall go free.

Then they threw down their sacks on the ground and opened them. And the man searched through them all, and began with that of the eldest, and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack.

Then they rent their clothes, and loaded their asses, and

went back to the city. And Judah and his brethren came to Joseph's house, and fell down on the ground before him.

Joseph said to them, What is this that thou hast done? Judah said, What shall we say, my lord? what shall we speak? and how shall we clear ourselves? God hath found out our sins. Behold we are thy slaves, both we and he also with whom the cup was found.

MEETING OF JOSEPH AND BENJAMIN.

Joseph said, God forbid that I should do this; but the one in whose sack the cup was found shall stay with me and be my servant, and the rest of you may go in peace.

Then Judah drew near, and said, O my lord, let me speak a word in thine ears, and let not thine anger burn against thy servant, for thou art as great a king as Pharaoh.

Thou didst ask us if we had a father or a brother, and we said, We have a father an old man, and a young lad the child

of his old age. His brother is dead, and he is the only one left of his mother, and his father loves him dearly.

Thou didst say to us, Bring the lad down to me that I may see him.

And we told thee the lad could not leave his father, for if he did the old man would surely die. And thou saidst, Except your younger brother come down with you, ye shall see my face no more.

And we told our father these words, and when he said, Go down again and buy corn, we said we could not see thy face if our youngest brother was not with us. And the father said, Ye know that my wife Rachel bare me two sons. And one went out from me, and was torn in pieces, and I have not seen him since. And if ye take this one from me, and he comes to harm, ye will bring down my gray hairs with sorrow to the grave. And if we should go home and not have the lad with us the old man will surely die. Let me be thy servant, in his place, and let the lad go back with his brethren.

Then Joseph sent every man out of the room but himself and his brethren, and he made himself known to them. He said to them, Come near, I pray you. And they came near. And he said, I am Joseph, your brother, whom you sold into Egypt. But be not grieved or angry with yourselves, for God did send me here before you that I might save your lives. It was not you that sent me here, but God.

Haste to my father, and tell him that God hath made me ruler over all Egypt, and bid him come down to me at once. And Joseph fell on Benjamin's neck and wept; and Benjamin wept on his neck. And he kissed his brethren, and wept over them, and after that they talked a long while together.

Then the brethren went back to the land of Canaan, and told their father all that had taken place, and the word that Joseph had sent to him. And Jacob said, It is enough: Joseph my son is yet alive. I will go and see him before I die.

And he and his sons, with their wives and children, their goods and their cattle, went out of the land of Canaan into the land of Goshen, where Joseph had bid them come and live. And Joseph went out and met his father at Go-hen.

And Jacob said to him, Now let me die, since I have seen thy face, because thou art yet alive.

And Joseph took care of his father and his brethren and their families, and did not let them, or their flocks or herds, lack for food. And Jacob lived in Egypt seventeen years. And when he was like to die he called Joseph to his bedside

JACOB BLESSES JOSEPH'S CHILDREN.

and begged him not to bury him in Egypt, but in the cave in the field of Machpelah. And Joseph did so.

When their father was dead, the brethren thought that Joseph would hate them, and that he had been good to them only for his father's sake.

And they sent a messenger to Joseph to ask him to forgive their sins. Joseph wept, and said, Fear not; I am not God.

If they had done wrong they should pray to God and not to man. And he was kind to them and took care of them. And Joseph was one hundred and ten years old when he died. And they embalmed him, and he was put in a coffin in Egypt.

CHAPTER XIV.

PHARAOH, AND THE PLAGUES OF EGYPT.

The sons of Jacob had large families, and they dwelt in Egypt, and became a great nation.

Some years after Joseph's death, a new king reigned in Egypt. Pharaoh was the name given to all the kings of Egypt.

This Pharaoh did not know Joseph, and was harsh to the children of Israel, and gave them hard tasks to do. For the Hebrews were slaves to the Egyptians. The King of Egypt saw that the Hebrews were growing to be a mighty people, and he feared that they might rise up and fight against the Egyptians and drive them from the land.

So he made a law that every male child that was born among the Hebrews should be thrown into the river Nile. As soon as this was known, the poor Hebrew mothers were wild with grief. One of them hid her boy babe for three months; and then, when she could hide him no longer, she had a little boat made like an ark of the rushes that grow on the river banks. It was daubed on the outside with mud and pitch, so that it would not leak, and the child was placed therein and left among the green flags by the water's edge. And his sister stood afar off to see what would be done to him.

Now the daughter of Pharaoh came down to the river to bathe, and as she and her maidens walked along through the tall reeds, or flags, they saw the little boat. And one of the maids brought it to the king's daughter. And when she looked at the child, it began to cry. And she was sorry for

MOSES IN THE ARK OF BULRUSHES.

it, and said, This is one of the Hebrews' children. And she made up her mind to bring it up herself, and take care of it.

Then the babe's sister stepped up and asked if she should fetch a nurse for it from among the Hebrew women. Pharaoh's daughter said, Go. And the maid went and called the child's mother. The king's daughter said, Take this child

THE FINDING OF MOSES.

and nurse it, and I will pay thee for it. And the woman took the child and nursed it. And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. And she called his name Moses, which means Drawn out of the water.

One day Moses, when grown to be a man, went out to visit the Hebrews, and to watch them at their tasks. And he spied an Egyptian striking a Hebrew. And he looked around,

and seeing no one near, he slew the Egyptian and hid him in the sand.

The next day he went out and saw two of the Hebrew men fighting, and found fault with the one who did the wrong.

MOSES BROUGHT BEFORE PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER.

The man said, Who made thee a prince and a judge over us? Dost thou intend to kill me as thou didst the Egyptian? And Moses was afraid, and said, Surely this thing is known.

When Pharaoh heard of it, he sought to slay Moses. But

Moses fled to the land of Midian; and he found a wife there, and took care of the flock of Jethro his father-in-law.

One day as he led the flock up to Mount Horeb he looked and saw a bush on fire, and yet it was not burnt up. And

MOSES AT THE BURNING BUSH.

Moses said, I will go nearer and see this great sight, and why the bush is not burnt. And a voice spoke to him out of the bush and said, Moses, Moses. And he said, Here am I.

And the voice said, Draw not nigh, but put thy shoes from

off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground. I am the God of thy father, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

And Moses hid his face, for he was afraid to look upon God.

God told him that he had heard the cries of the children of Israel, and had come down to set them free from the Egyptians. And he told Moses that he would send him to Pharaoh to tell him to let the children of Israel go. And Moses should lead the children of Israel out of Egypt and bring them to this mountain.

But Moses was afraid, and said, Who am I that I should go to Pharaoh, and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt? God said, Certainly I will be with thee.

And God commanded Moses to say to the children of Israel, that the Lord God of their fathers, the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, had sent him to bring them to a land flowing with milk and honey. After this, Moses was to go to Pharaoh and ask him to let the children of Israel go.

Moses said they would not believe in him or listen to him.

Now Moses had a rod in his hand. And the Lord said to him, What is that in thy hand? Moses said, A rod. The Lord said, Cast it on the ground. And he cast it on the ground, and it became a serpent, and Moses ran away from it. The Lord told Moses to take it by the tail, and he put forth his hand and caught it, and it became a rod once more.

Then the Lord told Moses to put his hand in his bosom, and he put it in, and when he took it out it was like a dead hand, and as white as snow. And the Lord said, Put thy hand in thy bosom again. And he put it in, and when he drew it out it was like the rest of his flesh.

The Lord told him if the people would not believe these two signs nor listen to him, then he was to take water out of the river and pour it on the dry land, and it would change to blood.

But Moses was still afraid to go, and said he was a man of few words and slow of speech, and for that reason unfit for such a work. God said, Do not I make the deaf, dumb, and blind? And he commanded Moses to go, and said, I will be with thee, and will teach thee what to say.

Still Moses held back and begged God to send some one else, who could act as speaker.

God was angry with Moses, and said, Is not Aaron, the son of Levi, thy brother? I know that he can speak well. Take him, and he shall be thy spokesman, and I will tell you both what ye shall do.

After the Lord had done speaking, Moses went back to

THE SERVITUDE OF THE ISRAELITES.

Jethro, and asked permission to go to Egypt and visit his brethren. Jethro said to him, Go in peace.

God commanded Aaron to go out and meet Moses; and he met him on Mount Horeb, and kissed him. And Moses told Aaron all the words of the Lord, and all the miracles he had commanded him to do. And they both went down among the children of Israel and spoke with the elders. And the children of Israel believed that God had sent

Moses and Aaron, and that He would free them from the hands of Pharaoh.

Afterwards Moses and Aaron told Pharaoh what the Lord had said, and begged him to let the children of Israel go. But Pharaoh said, Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice? I know not the Lord, neither will I let Israel go. And he gave the poor Hebrews harder tasks to perform, and

MOSES AND AARON DEMANDING THE DELIVERANCE OF THEIR PEOPLE.

set them to making bricks without straw. And the task-masters beat them and treated them most cruelly.

The Lord told Moses to speak to the children of Israel and tell them that God would free them from their bondage to the Egyptians, and bring them into a good and pleasant land. But the children of Israel were so cast down that they cared nothing for what Moses said.

Then the Lord commanded Moses and Aaron to go before

Pharaoh, and said to them, When Pharaoh shall say, Show us one of your miracles, then thou shalt say to Aaron, Take thy rod and cast it before Pharaoh, and it shall become a serpent.

And Moses and Aaron did as the Lord commanded. And Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh sent for the wise men and sorcerers, or magicians, of Egypt, and they performed the same enchantments. But Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods. Still Pharaoh would not let the children of Israel go.

Then the Lord told Moses to go the next morning and stand by the river's side, and when Pharaoh came there he was to say to him, The God of the Hebrews hath sent me to thee, saying, Let my people go that they may sacrifice to me in the wilderness. And Moses did as the Lord said.

But Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Then God commanded Aaron to take the rod and strike the waters with it that they might be changed to blood. And Aaron took the rod and struck the waters, and Pharaoh and his servants saw him do it. And all the water in the river was turned to blood, so that the Egyptians could not drink it.

Then Pharaoh's servants, the magicians, came, and they too turned water into blood. And Pharaoh went back to his home and would not let the people go. Then all the Egyptians dug round about the river for water they could drink. And the blood stayed in the river for seven days.

The Lord told Moses to go to Pharaoh again and say to him, Let my people go, or the Lord will send frogs all over the land. But Pharaoh would not let them go. Then God commanded Aaron to strike the waters with his rod. And he did so; and the frogs came up all over the land of Egypt. And Pharaoh's magicians did the same thing, and brought more frogs upon the land of Egypt.

The plague became so great, for frogs were in the houses and bedrooms, and even in the bread dough, that Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and told them if the Lord would take away the frogs, he would let the people go.

Moses said to Pharaoh it should be done, and the frogs should remain in the river only. And the next day the frogs died all over the land. And when Pharaoh found that he

was free from this plague, his heart grew hard again, and he would not let the people go.

Then the Lord commanded Aaron to stretch out his rod and strike it in the dust. And Aaron did so, and the dust became lice, in man and beast, throughout all the land of Egypt. Pharaoh's magicians tried but could not drive away the lice, and they said to Pharaoh, This is the finger of God. But Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Then God told Moses to go early in the morning to the river-side, and when Pharaoh came, to say to him, Thus saith the Lord, Let my people go that they may serve me, else I will send swarms of flies all over Egypt; and there shall be no flies in the land of Goshen, where my people dwell.

But Pharaoh would not listen to Moses; and the Lord sent swarms of flies all over the land of Egypt, and into the houses of Pharaoh and his servants.

And Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and said, I will let you go and sacrifice to your God, if you go not far away, and will ask him to drive the flies out of the land. Moses said he would do so, and told Pharaoh not to deceive him any more, but to let the people go to sacrifice to the Lord. Then Moses went out from Pharaoh and asked God to remove the flies from the land. And God did so; and there was not one left. And still Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Then the Lord told Moses to go to Pharaoh, and tell him, if he did not let the people go, God would send a plague upon the cattle, and all the horses, asses, camels, oxen, and sheep would surely die. And none of the cattle of the children of Israel should die. And the Lord set a time, and said, To-morrow shall this thing be done in the land. And all the cattle of Egypt died; but none of the cattle of the children of Israel died, not one. And Pharaoh sent over, and found that it was so; and yet he would not let the people go.

Then the Lord told Moses to take handfuls of ashes from the furnace, and throw them up in the air where Pharaoh could see them. And they shall cause boils to break out on man and on beast throughout all the land of Egypt.

And Moses and Aaron took ashes from the furnace, and threw them up in the air, and boils broke out at once on man

and beast. Pharaoh saw them do it, and his magicians were so covered with boils that they could not stand before Moses. And yet Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Then the Lord sent a storm of hail, thunder, and lightning, such as had never been known before in all the land of Egypt. And it struck down men and beasts, the trees and everything else that was out-of-doors. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and pretended to be sorry for his sins, and said he would let the people go, if God would stop this plague. And Moses went out from the city and stretched his hands up unto the Lord, and the thunders and hail ceased, and the rain came to an end. And when Pharaoh saw that the storm was over and that he was free from this plague, he lost all fear of God and would not let the people go.

Then the Lord sent locusts all over the land, and they ate up everything the hail had left. And there was not a green leaf on the trees or in the fields through all the land of Egypt. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron in great haste, and he said, I have sinned against the Lord your God, and against you. And he begged them to ask God to take away this dreadful plague. And Moses did so. And the Lord sent a strong west wind which took away the locusts and cast them into the Red Sea; so there was not one locust in all the coasts of Egypt. And yet Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Then the Lord shut out the light of heaven, and there was darkness in all the land of Egypt for three days. The people could not see each other, and had to have lights in their dwellings. Pharaoh sent for Moses, and told him that he and his people might go and sacrifice to their God, but they must leave their cattle behind them. Moses said they must have something to sacrifice with; and then Pharaoh would not let them go. And he said to Moses, Get thee from me; take heed to thyself; see my face no more. For in that day thou seest my face thou shalt die. And Moses said, Thou hast spoken well, I will see thy face no more.

The Lord said to Moses, I will send one more plague upon Egypt, after which Pharaoh will let you go, and will surely thrust you out of the land. Then he told Moses to speak to the children of Israel and have them borrow ornaments of

silver and gold from the Egyptians. And he was to say to Pharaoh and his servants that about midnight the Lord would go out into the midst of Egypt, and all the first born should die, from the highest to the lowest in the land. And there shall be a great cry through all the land of Egypt, such as was never heard before, and never shall be heard again. But no harm should be done to the children of Israel. And Pha-

DEATH OF THE FIRST BORN IN EGYPT.

raoh's servants should bow down before Moses and his people and beg them to go out of the land; and after that they should go out. And having said this Moses turned from Pharaoh, and was very angry. But Pharaoh would not let the people go.

Then God told Moses and Aaron that every man among the Israelites was to take a lamb and keep it for four days. And they were to kill it, and take a bunch of hyssop, and dip it in the blood and sprinkle it on the lintel and the two side-posts

of the houses. And he promised when he saw the blood, he would pass over those houses and harm no one in them.

The supper of the lamb they were to eat was to be called the Lord's passover, and the feast was to be kept up from year to year. And at this supper and for seven days afterwards they were to eat only a certain kind of bread. This was called unleavened bread, because it was made without yeast.

So Moses called the elders of Israel together, and told them all that the Lord had said, and the elders told the people. Then every man took his lamb and kept it four days. Then he killed it in the evening, and sprinkled the blood on the door-posts, and cooked the flesh and ate it as had been commanded.

And in the dead of the night the Lord smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, and there was not a house in which there was not some one dead in it. And there was a great cry throughout the land. Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron in the night, and told them to go out of Egypt, and take the children of Israel with them. Take your flocks and your herds also, he said, and begone. And all the Egyptians were in haste to have them go so that their own lives might be saved.

The Israelites took their kneading-troughs with the dough in them, and bound the troughs up in their clothes, and bore them on their shoulders. And they had demanded ornaments of gold and silver from the Egyptians, and fine clothes also. For the Lord made the Egyptians willing to let them have these things. And these they took with them out of Egypt, and went from Rameses to Succoth: six hundred thousand men, women, and children, besides great flocks of sheep and goats, and herds of cattle.

And the Lord went before them, in the form of a cloud, which was so large as to overshadow the camps of Israel by day, and at night would shine like a fire to give them light.

CHAPTER XV.

THROUGH THE RED SEA.—THE TEN COMMANDMENTS.

When Pharaoh learned that the Israelites had not gone to Mount Horeb, but had fled out of the country, he began to feel that he had done wrong in letting them go. So he called out his army, and with his horsemen and chariots set out in

THE DELIVERANCE OF THE ISRAELITES.

pursuit of the children of Israel, and overtook them by the Red Sea.

When they came in sight of the camp the children of Israel were afraid and cried unto the Lord, and they blamed Moses for having brought them out of Egypt to die in the wilderness. It would have been better for us, they said, to have remained slaves to the Egyptians. Moses told them not

to fear, but to wait patiently and see what wonders the Lord would show them that day. The Lord shall fight for you, he said; and they would only have to look on and obey His words.

Then Moses prayed to the Lord for help. The sea was before him, and Pharaoh's army was behind. Which way could he lead the children of Israel? God told Moses to stretch his rod over the sea, and the waters would divide, and the children of Israel should march through it on dry land.

Moses did so, and all that night a strong east wind blew and swept the sea back, until for a long space there was only dry land. And the children of Israel marched over dry-shod, and the waters stood up on either side of them like a great wall.

Pharaoh and his host followed hard after the children of Israel, and when the Egyptians were in the midst of the sea, Moses stretched out his hand and the wall of waters gave way, and the king and his army, with all the horses and chariots, were drowned. Thus the Lord saved Israel out of the hand of the Egyptians; and the people feared the Lord, and believed in his servant Moses.

They sang songs of praise and thanks to God. Miriam, the prophetess, a sister of Aaron, took a timbrel in her hand and led in a dance, and all the women took their timbrels and danced with her. The timbrel, or tambourine, was a favorite instrument on sacred and festive occasions. There were three kinds: one round, another square, and a third composed of two squares separated by a bar. They were all beaten by the hand, and often used as an accompaniment to the harp and other instruments. The tambourine was usually played by females, who are represented as dancing to its sound without the accompaniment of any other instrument.

The children of Israel marched for three days without any water; and when they came to a brook they found the water so bitter they could not drink it. They called the stream Marah, which means bitter. Instead of praying to God, as they should have done, they found fault with Moses, and asked him what they should drink.

Moses prayed to God, and God showed him a tree and told

him what to do. And Moses took a branch of the tree and threw it in the waters, which were made sweet and wholesome.

When they came to Elim, they found twelve wells of water,

MIRIAM AND THE WOMEN OF ISRAEL SINGING PRAISES.

one for each tribe, and threescore and ten palm-trees, for cooling shade and pleasant fruit, and there they encamped.

When they left Elim the children of Israel marched back towards the Red Sea, and came to the wilderness of Sin, not far from Sinai, just a month from the time they had set out from

Egypt. They were angry at this, and found great fault with Moses and Aaron, and said, Would to God we had died in Egypt by the hand of the Lord, when we had meat and bread in plenty. For ye have brought us into the wilderness that we may die of hunger.

Moses prayed to the Lord, and the Lord said they should have flesh to eat in the evening, and plenty of bread in the morning. They should go out and gather a certain portion every day, and on the sixth day gather twice as much as they did on the other days, for he meant to try them, to see whether they would keep his laws or not, and also to let them know that God was with them, and would take care of them.

And God did as he promised. In the evening, when the sun went down, great flocks of quails came into the camp, so that there was no lack of meat. And in the morning, when the dew was dried up, there lay on the ground a small round thing as small as the hoar frost. When the children of Israel saw it they said, It is manna. Moses told them it was the bread which the Lord had given them to eat. And they were to gather it as the Lord had commanded, and according to the size of their families. And the children of Israel did so; and he that gathered much had nothing over, and he that gathered little had no lack.

If any was left over until the next morning it was spoiled and full of worms. But that which was gathered on the sixth day to be eaten on the Sabbath was not spoiled, but was sweet and good. The Lord sent none on the Sabbath, for he did not want the people to go out and gather it on that day. Some went out on the seventh day to gather some, but found none.

The children of Israel called this new food—which the Lord sent them from heaven—*Manna;* and it was round, like coriander-seed, and white, and tasted like cakes made with honey. Moses told Aaron to take a pot and put in it three quarts of Manna, which would be about what one person would eat during the day. And that pot of Manna was to be kept, so that the Israelites who should live long afterwards might see what kind of food the Lord had given the children of Israel when they went through the wilderness on their way

to the land of Canaan. Manna was the food of the Israelites during their wanderings in the desert.

And all the congregation of the children of Israel journeyed from the wilderness of Sin, after their journeys, according to the commandment of the Lord, and pitched in Rephidim: and there was no water for the people to drink.

MANNA IN THE DESERT.

Wherefore the people did chide with Moses, and said, Give us water that we may drink. And Moses said unto them, Why chide ye with me? wherefore do ye tempt the Lord?

And the people thirsted there for water; and the people murmured against Moses, and said, Wherefore is this that thou hast brought us up out of Egypt to kill us and our children and our cattle with thirst?

And Moses cried unto the Lord, saying, What shall I do unto this people? they be almost ready to stone me.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Go on before the people, and take with thee of the elders of Israel: and thy rod, wherewith thou smotest the river, take in thine hand, and go.

Behold, I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb; and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come

AARON AND HUR HOLDING UP MOSES' HANDS.

water out of it, that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel.

And he called the name of the place Massah, and Meribah, because of the chiding of the children of Israel, and because they tempted the Lord, saying, Is the Lord among us, or not?

Then came Amalek, and fought with Israel in Rephidim.

And Moses said unto Joshua, Choose us out men, and go

out, fight with Amalek : to-morrow I will stand on the top of the hill with the rod of God in mine hand.

So Joshua did as Moses had said to him, and fought with Amalek : and Moses, Aaron, and Hur, went up to the top of the hill. And it came to pass, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed : and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed. But Moses' hands were heavy ; and they took a stone, and put it under him, and he sat thereon : and Aaron and Hur stayed up his hands, the one on the one side, and the other on the other side ; and his hands were steady until the going down of the sun.

MOUNT SINAI.

And Joshua discomfited Amalek and his people with the edge of the sword. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write this for a memorial in a book, and rehearse it in the ears of Joshua : for I will utterly put out the remembrance of Amalek from under heaven. And Moses built an altar, and called the name of it Jehovah-nissi ; for he said, Because the Lord hath sworn that the Lord will have war with Amalek from generation to generation.

Three months after the Israelites left the land of Egypt they encamped before Sinai. Moses went up into the mount when God gave him a message for the people. He told him

to remind them how he had delivered them from the Egyptians, and to tell them that if they would only obey his commandments they would be his peculiar treasure above all people. The people replied that they would obey, and the Lord also said that he would come in a thick cloud on the third day so that the people might hear when he spoke to Moses. He told them by Moses to wash their clothes and to avoid evil, and to be sure not to go up into the mount or to touch the border of it, for if they did they would surely be put to death. But when they heard the trumpet sound they were to come to the foot of the mountain. Moses went down from the mount and had them wash their clothes and bathe themselves, and warned them against sin.

On the morning of the third day there were thunderings and lightnings, and a thick cloud rested on the mount and a trumpet was blown so loudly that the people were afraid and trembled. Moses brought them out of the camp to meet with God. Mount Sinai was all on a smoke, because the Lord descended upon it in fire, and the smoke ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly. And when the trumpet sounded long and louder and louder Moses spoke, and God answered him by a voice, and called him up to the top of the mountain. From this mount God spoke the Ten Commandments.

I.

THOU SHALT HAVE NO OTHER GODS BEFORE ME.

II.

THOU SHALT NOT MAKE UNTO THEE ANY GRAVEN IMAGE, OR ANY LIKENESS OF ANY THING THAT IS IN HEAVEN ABOVE, OR THAT IS IN THE EARTH BENEATH, OR THAT IS IN THE WATER UNDER THE EARTH: THOU SHALT NOT BOW DOWN THYSELF TO THEM, NOR SERVE THEM: FOR I, THE LORD THY GOD, AM A JEALOUS GOD, VISITING THE INIQUITY OF THE FATHERS UPON THE CHILDREN UNTO THE THIRD AND FOURTH GENERATION OF THEM THAT HATE ME; AND SHOWING MERCY UNTO THOUSANDS OF THEM THAT LOVE ME, AND KEEP MY COMMANDMENTS.

III.

THOU SHALT NOT TAKE THE NAME OF THE LORD THY GOD IN VAIN: FOR THE LORD WILL NOT HOLD HIM GUILTLESS THAT TAKETH HIS NAME IN VAIN.

IV.

REMEMBER THE SABBATH DAY TO KEEP IT HOLY. SIX DAYS SHALT THOU LABOR, AND DO ALL THY WORK: BUT THE SEVENTH DAY IS THE SABBATH OF THE LORD THY GOD: IN IT THOU SHALT NOT DO ANY WORK, THOU, NOR THY SON, NOR THY DAUGHTER, NOR THY MAN-SERVANT, NOR THY MAID-SERVANT, NOR THY CATTLE, NOR THY STRANGER THAT IS WITHIN THY GATES.

FOR IN SIX DAYS THE LORD MADE HEAVEN AND EARTH, THE SEA AND ALL THAT IN THEM IS, AND RESTED THE SEVENTH DAY: WHEREFORE THE LORD BLESSED THE SABBATH DAY, AND HALLOWED IT.

V.

HONOR THY FATHER AND THY MOTHER; THAT THY DAYS MAY BE LONG UPON THE LAND WHICH THE LORD THY GOD GIVETH THEE.

VI.

THOU SHALT NOT KILL.

VII.

THOU SHALT NOT COMMIT ADULTERY.

VIII.

THOU SHALT NOT STEAL.

IX.

THOU SHALT NOT BEAR FALSE WITNESS AGAINST THY NEIGHBOR.

X.

THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S HOUSE, THOU SHALT NOT COVET THY NEIGHBOR'S WIFE, NOR HIS MAN-SERVANT, NOR HIS MAID-SERVANT, NOR HIS OX, NOR HIS ASS, NOR ANY THING THAT IS THY NEIGHBOR'S.

And all the people saw the lightnings and the smoke, and heard the roar of the thunder, and the sound of the trumpet. And they heard the voice of God also, and were afraid. And they said to Moses, Speak thou with us, and we will hear; but let not God speak with us lest we die. Moses said, Fear not: God is come to prove you and that his fear may be before your faces.

MOSES RECEIVING THE TABLES OF LAW.

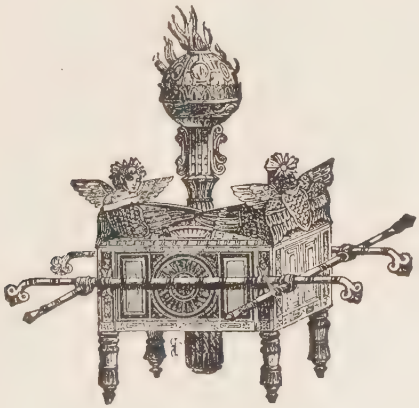
And all the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was, and the Lord said unto Moses, Thus thou shalt say unto the children of Israel, You have seen that I talked with you from heaven. And Moses wrote all these laws in a book, and read them to the people of Israel, and they promised to obey them.

But God called Moses up on Mount Sinai a second time,

when he told him that he would give him tables of stone, with the Ten Commandments written upon them, which he was to teach the people.

And Moses went up on the mount with Joshua, and the glory of the Lord abode upon the mount, and a cloud covered it six days.

On the seventh day God called unto Moses out of the midst of the cloud, and Moses went up the mount through the cloud and was there for forty days and forty nights; and the children of Israel saw the glory of the Lord, like a bright fire burning on top of the mountain.



THE ARK.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, saying, Speak unto the children of Israel, and let them make me a sanctuary that I may dwell among them. It was to be made of the choicest wood, and to have blue and purple and scarlet curtains of the finest silk.

A great amount of gold, silver, and brass would be needed, and God told Moses to ask the people to bring them, and whoever had an offering for the sanctuary was to be allowed to bring it.

And they shall make an ark of shittim wood. This ark was a chest, made of wood, and then covered over with gold, both inside and outside, so that the wood could not be seen.

When it was finished the tables of stone were to be placed inside of it.

There was a ring of gold at each corner of the ark, through which the poles were to be put when it was borne from place to place. A cover of pure gold called the mercy-seat was also to be made for the ark, with two golden cherubim, or angels, on top of it; one angel at each end. They were to face each other with their wings extended so that they covered the entire top of the ark.

They were also to make a table of wood covered with pure gold, and put a raised border on the edge, and a ring of gold at each corner. And all the vessels or dishes to be used on this table were to be of pure gold. And there was to be a beautiful golden candlestick with six branches, or arms, three on each side, to give light in the Holy Place.

God told Moses how the tabernacle should be made, and where and how the curtains should be hung. One curtain was called a veil, and was arranged so as to form two rooms. One of these rooms was to be called the most holy place, or Holy of Holies, and here the ark was to be placed with the cherubim upon it.

The court of the tabernacle was enclosed with posts or pillars of brass to which the large curtains of the tent were to be fastened.

The Lord told Moses that Aaron and his four sons should be priests. Aaron was to be called the high priest.

Beautiful garments were to be made for the priests out of the finest linen, richly embroidered in colors. The ephod, or short cloak to cover the shoulders and breast, was to be woven in one piece, with a hole in the centre for the head to pass through. It was fringed at either end, handsomely embroidered, and set with precious stones, and held in at the waist by a belt, or girdle. Over the ephod was worn a breastplate of pure gold on the front of which were the words HOLINESS TO THE LORD. And the high priest was to wear a mitre, or head-dress, made of fine linen, handsomely embroidered, held in place around the forehead by a band of gold on which were the words HOLINESS TO THE LORD.

The Lord told Moses to bring Aaron and his sons to the

door, and there he was to wash them with water, and put upon them the special garment made for the priests, the long coat that had sleeves and would cover him from head to foot, and over this the ephod, and the breastplate, and fasten them on at the waist with the curious girdle.

After this was done Moses was to pour oil on the heads of Aaron and his sons, as a sign that they had been set apart to do holy work.

And Aaron and his sons, the priests, were to offer up two

THE GOLDEN CANDLESTICK.

lambs every day, one in the morning, the other in the evening, on the brass altar, for the sins of the people.

And the Lord told Moses to make another altar of wood covered with pure gold, on which Aaron was to burn incense every morning. It was to stand inside the Holy Place with the golden candlestick, and nothing was ever to be burned upon it but the purest incense, made from mixed spices. This incense was to be burnt twice a day ; once in the morning, and again in the evening when the lamps are lighted. The smoke from this incense would rise upward even as our prayers through the intercession of our great High Priest Jesus Christ,

rise to heaven, and was to teach that all things are of God and for God.

The Lord commanded Moses to make a laver, a great basin of brass, and to set it outside the tabernacle and near the brazen altar. This laver was to be kept filled with water, and there Aaron and his sons were to wash their hands and feet.

When the Lord had told Moses all these things, he gave into his hands the two tables of stone, on which were written the Ten Commandments.

Moses staid so long upon the mountain, that the children of Israel thought that he did not intend to come back to them. So they went to Aaron and asked him to make idols for them to worship. Aaron should have turned their thoughts from such things, but instead of that he told the children of Israel to bring the golden earrings they had borrowed from the Egyptians, and he threw the gold in the fire and it came out in the shape of a calf. And Aaron set up an altar in front of it; and the next day being a feast day, set apart by the Lord, the people brought burnt offerings and peace offerings, and ate and drank and made merry.

When Joshua heard the shouts of the people he said to Moses, There is a noise of war in the camp. And Moses said it was not the noise of war but the sound of singing that he heard. And when he came near the camp, and saw the calf, and the dancing, he was so angry that he threw the tables of stone out of his hands, and they were broken in pieces at the foot of the mount. And he took the calf which they had made and burnt it in the fire, ground it to powder, and sprinkled it upon the water, and made the children of Israel drink of it.

And Moses said unto Aaron, What did these people unto thee, that thou hast brought so great a sin upon them?

And Aaron said, Let not the anger of my lord wax hot: thou knowest the people, that they are set on mischief.

For they said unto me, Make us gods which shall go before us: for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what is become of him.

And I said unto them, Whosoever hath any gold, let them

break it off. So they gave it me: then I cast it into the fire, and there came out this calf.

Then Moses stood in the gate of the camp, and said, Who is on the Lord's side? let him come unto me. And all the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him.

And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from

MOSES BREAKING THE TABLES OF THE LAW.

gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor.

And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men.

And it came to pass on the morrow, that Moses said unto the people, Ye have sinned a great sin: and now I will go up

unto the Lord; peradventure I shall make an atonement for your sin.

And Moses returned unto the Lord, and said, Oh, this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold.

Yet now, if thou wilt forgive their sin: and if not, blot me, I pray thee, out of thy book which thou hast written.

MOSES PUNISHING THE IDOLATERS.

And the Lord said unto Moses, Whosoever hath sinned against me, him will I blot out of my book.

Therefore now go, lead the people unto the place of which I have spoken unto thee: Behold mine Angel shall go before thee: nevertheless, in the day when I visit, I will visit their sin upon them. And the Lord plagued the people.

Afterward Moses came unto them and told them all that the Lord had spoken with him in Mount Sinai.

Then the people went to work and built the tabernacle, after the pattern the Lord had given Moses. Gold, silver, brass, and precious stones were brought to them, and these were made use of by skilful workmen to beautify the house of God. Some made the coats of fine linen for the priests, and embroidered the hems most beautifully, in pomegranates of blue, and purple, and scarlet. And they hung a little golden bell between each pomegranate. And Moses saw all the work that they did.

They had been a whole year in the wilderness; and at the end of the first month of the second year, the tabernacle was finished. Then the Lord told Moses to set up the tabernacle, and put the ark in it, and the table, and to bring in the candlestick, and light all the lamps that were in it. And he was to set the altar of gold for the incense before the ark, and to hang the curtains before the door.

The altar of the burnt offering was to be placed outside, and the laver, with water in it, between the altar and the Holy Place. When everything was in place, and Aaron and his sons had put on their garments, the cloud that had gone with the children of Israel to show them the way, rested over the tabernacle and covered it. And the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle so that Moses could not go into it.

CHAPTER XVI.

MOSES AS LAWGIVER—NADAB AND ABIHU—DEATH OF AARON—BALAAM'S ASS SPEAKS—DEATH OF MOSES.

THE tabernacle being finished God now revealed himself to Moses in it instead of on the mount. He appeared in a cloud over the mercy-seat between the golden cherubim, and from it he spoke to Moses and gave many laws for the children of Israel in addition to those he had given before.

Moses, at the command of God, consecrated Aaron and his sons to the office of priests, he brought them to the door of the tabernacle, where he washed them with water, clothed

them with beautiful garments, and then poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head to sanctify him. The fire upon the altar being once kindled the priests were to keep it always burning.

The blood of the animal offered as a burnt offering was to be sprinkled round about upon the altar. They were also to gather the wood and make the fire, and burn up all the parts of the animal that had been offered. The priest was commanded to offer a lamb every morning and evening; besides this three other sacrifices were to be offered. First, the Sin offering. Aaron and his sons lay their hands on the bullock, confessing their sins, and so transferring their guilt to the animal as a victim. The bullock was then slain, and its blood put upon the horns of the altar.

This offering represented our Saviour, who would bear our sins, and shed his blood to save us.

A second offering commanded was the Burnt offering. This was the offering of a ram, the blood of which was sprinkled upon the altar, and its body entirely burned by fire on the altar, teaching us that we are to give ourselves wholly to God.

A third was a Peace offering. Aaron and his sons placed their hands on the head of a ram. The ram was then slain, and some of its blood was put on the right ear, hand, and foot of Aaron and his sons, signifying that they were to hear and do the will of God and to walk in his commandments.

Aaron, as you know, had four sons. The eldest was named Nadab. One day he and his brother, Abihu, took their lamps, or censers, and putting a coal of fire in each placed the incense on top. They had been anointed as priests unto the Lord, and should not have disobeyed the least of his laws. So God, to punish them, sent a fire from heaven, and Nadab and Abihu immediately fell dead.

Moses told Aaron that the Lord had said that those who came near him must come with reverence, that before all the people His name might be glorified. And Aaron held his peace, and the bodies of his sons were borne out of the camp and buried with no show of grief. For the people feared that God in his anger might burn up all the children of Israel.

MOSES AND THE TABLES OF THE LAW.

And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Do not drink wine nor strong drink, thou nor thy sons with thee, when ye go into the tabernacle, lest ye die. That ye may put difference between what is holy and unholy, and what is clean and unclean, and may teach the children of Israel all the laws which the Lord gave to them by the hand of Moses.

And the Lord spoke to Moses, and told him that there were certain animals whose flesh the Israelites might eat, and other animals whose flesh they must not use for food. They were not to eat of all kinds of fishes, nor of birds, but were to eat only those that God set apart for their use.

The Lord told Moses what should be done in case of sickness, or of leprosy, so that the whole camp might not suffer from a plague. After the death of his two sons the Lord commanded Aaron to take two young goats, or kids, for a sin offering, and a ram for a burnt offering.

Aaron was to offer the ox as a sin offering for himself and his family. But he was to cast lots upon the two goats—one lot for the Lord and the other lot for the scape-goat. The one on whom the Lord's lot fell was to be burnt as a sin offering, but the other goat was to be sent off alive into the wilderness, to bear upon its head the sins of the people. This was to show that a Saviour was to come into the world, who would be our scape-goat—sinless himself, but bearing the punishment of our sins.

All these laws were repeated over and over again to the children of Israel, that they might become perfect in them, and fit themselves for the holy land toward which they were journeying.

Some were very strict in keeping these laws, and one day, when they found a man gathering sticks on the Sabbath day, they brought him before Moses and Aaron and the assembled people. And they put him in prison until they could decide how they should punish him. The Lord told Moses that the man must die for the sin he had committed. And the man was taken outside the camp, and the people stoned him to death.

On certain days of the year they were to hold feasts, and these feasts were to be sacredly kept by all the Israelites and their descendants.

The Feast of the Passover was held once a year, in memory of the time when God killed all the first-born children of the Egyptians, and passed over the houses of the Israelites that were sprinkled with the blood of the lamb.

The Feast of Pentecost lasted for seven weeks, and occurred in the time of harvest. It is sometimes called The Festival of Weeks.

The Feast of Trumpets was the celebration of the New Year.

The Feast of Tabernacles was a sort of Thanksgiving day, after the harvest was gathered in.

The Sabbath was also observed as a festival; and there were many others. On all these feast days the trumpets were blown to call the people together.

In the second month of the second year from the time they left Egypt, God spoke to Moses, and told him and Aaron to count the children of Israel, and set down their names, that it might be known how many there were, and to which tribe they belonged. And they were to make a special list of men who were twenty years old and upward, and able to fight for Israel in time of war. Moses and Aaron did so. And there were six hundred thousand and three thousand five hundred and fifty souls in the camp of the Israelites. The tribe of Levi was not numbered with these, for the Levites were to be brought up as priests, and to serve the Lord in the tabernacle.

At the end of forty years the Israelites left the wilderness, and encamped at Kadesh-barnea; and Miriam, the sister of Moses, died there. After a while there was a great scarcity of water, and the people found fault with Moses for bringing them to such a poor place, where there were no figs, nor grapes, nor pomegranates, nor any water to drink.

And Moses and Aaron went together into the tabernacle, and bowed down with their faces to the ground, and asked for the help of God. And the Lord spoke to Moses and told him to speak to the rock that was near the camp and the water would gush forth. Moses took his rod in his hand, and gathered the people together, and as they stood in front of the rock he said to them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch

you water out of this rock? And he struck the rock twice, and the water poured forth, and all drank freely of it.

The Lord was displeased with Moses, and told him that because he had disobeyed him, neither he nor Aaron should bring the children of Israel into the promised land. And Moses called the fountain MERIBAH, which means Strife.

Kadesh was on the farther border of Edom, where the descendants of Esau lived, and Moses sent messengers to the king of that place, asking that the children of Israel might pass through his country. They said, Let us pass, I pray thee. We will not go through the fields or vineyards, neither will we drink water from the wells. But we will go by the king's highway, and will not turn to the right hand or the left until we have passed thy borders.

The king of Edom sent word that they would have to fight their way through his country. The children of Israel said they would go by the highway, and would pay for the water that they or their cattle might drink, and would walk straight ahead. The king of Edom said they should not go through, and he sent out such a force of armed men that the children of Israel were compelled to turn back. And they came to Mount Hor.

The Lord spoke to Moses, and commanded him to bring Aaron and Eleazar, his son, up to the top of Mount Hor, and to strip off the garments of Aaron and put them on his son. For Aaron was to die there. And Moses did as the Lord commanded, and he and Aaron and Eleazar went up to Mount Hor in the sight of all the people. And Aaron died there in the top of the mount, and Moses and Eleazar came down together. And when the people heard that Aaron was dead, they mourned for him for thirty days. And Eleazar became high priest, and served in his father's place in the tabernacle.

As they could not cross the land of Edom in peace, they were forced to go round it, and on the way the children of Israel began to murmur again, and to find fault with Moses for bringing them out of the land of Egypt. For they were very tired and discouraged. But they were really finding fault with God, and to punish them he sent fiery serpents among them, to bite them. And many of the children of Israel died.

The bite of these serpents was like a fiery sting, and caused terrible suffering. And they begged Moses to pray the Lord to take away the serpents. And Moses prayed for the people.

And the Lord told Moses to make a great serpent of brass, and lift it up high on a pole so that all could see it. And

THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

those who were bitten by the fiery serpents were to look up to the brazen serpent and they would at once be made well.

And Moses made a serpent of brass and put it on a pole, and if any one was bitten and looked up to this serpent he would not die.

This was to show that a Saviour was to be raised up, who would save us from the stings and pains of sin and death. We have but to look and live! That is, we are to look with the eyes of faith, believe in Him and trust in Him, and He will

help us to endure the pains of this life, and will take us at last to live with Him in heaven.

As the children of Israel drew near to Heshbon, Moses sent messengers to Sihon, king of the Amorites and of Heshbon, and asked for permission to pass through his country. Sihon refused to let them pass, and gathered his armies together and went out and fought against the Israelites. But the Lord was with the children of Israel, and they overcame their enemies, and took possession of the land of the Amorites, where they dwelt for some time.

The children of Israel next encamped on the plains of Moab, near the city of Jericho. Balak, king of the Moabites, had heard how the Israelites had conquered the Amorites, and driven them from their land. And he and his people were in great fear of the advancing host.

There lived in Mesopotamia a man named Balaam, who had great skill in magic.

And Balak sent messengers to Balaam, and told him his fears. And he said, Come, and curse this people, for they are too mighty for me. And give me strength to drive them out of the land. For whom thou blessest is blessed, and whom thou cursest is cursed. This was giving to Balaam the power that belongs only to God.

The princes of Moab took money with them to reward Balaam, to whom they gave the messoge sent by Balak. Balaam said to them, Lodge here this night, and I will tell you in the morning what the Lord wills that I should do.

In the night God spoke to Balaam and said, What men are these with thee? Balaam answered that they had been sent by Balak, king of Moab, who desired him to come and curse the people that had been brought out of Egypt, so that he might have strength to overcome them.

God said to Balaam, Thou shalt not go with them; thou shalt not curse the people whom I have blessed. So Balaam said to the princes, in the morning, Go back to your own land, for the Lord refuseth to give me leave to go with you. And they went and told this to Balak.

Balak sent messengers again to Balaam—princes of higher rank than those who had made the first visit—and they said

to the prophet, Thus saith Balak, the son of Zippor, Let nothing, I pray thee, hinder thee from coming unto me : for I will give thee great honors, and will do whatsoever thou sayest. Come, therefore, I pray thee, and curse this people for me.

BALAAM AND THE ASS.

Balaam said to the servants of Balak, If Balak would give me his house full of silver and gold, I cannot go against the word of the Lord. Now, therefore, I pray you, stay here also this night, that I may know what more the Lord will say to me.

And God spoke to Balaam in the night, and said to him, If the men come to call thee, rise up and go with them ; but what I shall say to thee that shalt thou do. So Balaam rose up in the morning, and saddled his ass, and went with the princes of Moab.

Balaam was riding along with his two servants, when the ass saw an angel standing in the road with a drawn sword in his hand. The ass turned out into the field to let the stranger pass, and Balaam who saw not the angel, struck the poor beast to turn her back into the road again.

Presently Balaam came to a road that led through vineyards ; and there was a wall on either side. In this narrow place the ass saw the angel once more, and in order that both might have room to pass, the beast crowded close up against the wall, and in doing so crushed her master's foot, and Balaam struck her another blow.

The angel went farther on and stood in a narrow place where there was no space to turn to the right or the left. And as soon as the ass saw the angel she fell down in the road with Balaam on her back. This made Balaam very angry, and he smote the ass with his staff.

Then the Lord gave the ass the power of speech ; and she said to Balaam, What have I done to thee that thou hast struck me these three times? Balaam said, Because thou hast not minded me : I would there were a sword in my hand, for now would I kill thee.

The ass said to Balaam, Am I not thine ass, upon which thou hast ridden ever since I was able to bear thee? and did I ever do so to thee before?

Balaam answered, No ; and as he spoke his own eyes were opened, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way with a drawn sword in his hand. And Balaam bowed down with his face to the ground.

The angel of the Lord said to him, Wherefore hast thou struck thine ass these three times? Behold, I went out to turn thee back, because thou art going the wrong way. And the ass saw me, and turned from me three times. If she had not done so, I should surely have slain thee and saved her alive.

Balaam said to the angel, I have sinned, for I knew not that thou stoodest in the way against me: now, therefore, if this thing be evil in thy sight I will go back to my home again.

The angel told Balaam to go on with the men, but to speak only the words that God should put into his mouth.

When Balak heard that Balaam was on his way to Moab, he went out as far as Arnon to meet him. And as soon as he saw the prophet he began to chide him for not coming before, and said to Balaam, Didst thou think me unable to give thee the riches and honor I promised?

Balaam told Balak that he had come as it was with no power at all to say anything; but the word that God put into his mouth, that he would speak.

The next day Balak took Balaam up to a high place. And Balaam said to him, Build me here seven altars, and prepare me seven oxen and seven rams. And Balak did so; and Balaam offered on every altar an ox and a ram. And Balaam said to Balak, Stand by thy burnt offering, while I go and call upon the Lord; and whatsoever he bids me do I will tell to thee. And Balaam went farther up the mountain, and prayed to God. And God commanded him to return to Balak, and told him what to say to the king.

Balaam said to Balak, and to all the princes of Moab, How shall I curse whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I make those afraid whom God hath not threatened? For from the tops of the rocks and the hills I see Him, and know that He hath set this people apart to be a nation by themselves, that shall outnumber all other nations. Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!

Balak said to Balaam, What hast thou done to me? I brought thee here to curse my enemies, and thou hast blessed them altogether.

Balaam said that he could only speak such words as the Lord put into his mouth.

Then Balak said to Balaam, Come, I pray thee, to another place, where thou canst have a better view of the people, and curse me them from thence. And he took him to the top of Pisgah, and built seven altars there, and offered an ox and a sheep on every altar. And Balaam said to Balak, Stand here

by thy burnt offering, while I meet the Lord yonder. And the Lord told Balaam what he was to say. And when he returned Balak said, What hath the Lord spoken?

Balaam said, Hearken unto me, thou son of Zippor: God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of a man that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good? I am commanded to bless, and he blesses, and I cannot change it. God is with the children of Israel. He brought them up out of Egypt, and I can work no enchantment against them.

Balak said if he could not curse them he need not bless them. Balaam answered, saying, All that the Lord speaketh, that I must do.

Then Balak took Balaam to the top of Peor, that looked off toward the wilderness. And he built seven altars there, and offered an ox and a sheep on every altar. And when Balaam saw that it pleased the Lord to bless Israel, he went not off to work enchantments. And as he looked off and saw the camp of the Israelites, the Spirit of God came upon him, and he exclaimed, How goodly are thy tents, O Jacob! and thy tabernacles, O Israel! Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee.

Balak was very angry at these words, and struck his hands together, and he said to Balaam, I called thee to curse my enemies, and behold, these three times thou hast blessed them. Make haste now to thine own place. I thought to raise thee to great honor, but the Lord hath prevented it.

Balaam said, Did I not tell the messengers thou sent me? If Balak would give me a house full of silver and gold, I cannot disobey the Lord, to do good or evil of mine own mind, but what he bids me speak, that will I say. And he spoke further to Balak, as if in a trance, or seeing a vision with his eyes open, and said, I shall see him, but not now: I shall behold him, but not nigh: there shall come a Star out of Jacob, and a Sceptre shall rise out of Israel, and shall smite through the princes of Moab, and destroy all the children of Sheth. And after a few more words Balaam rose and went back to his home, and Balak also went on his way.

The children of Israel remained for some time on the

borders of the land of Moab, and Moses continued teaching them from day to day, and reading to them the laws that he had written down on Mount Sinai. And he made songs for

MOSES ON MOUNT NEBO.

them to sing, that they might lift their hearts and voices to the Lord, and speak his praise in sweet-sounding words.

One day God commanded Moses to go up Mount Nebo and take a look at the land of Canaan which he had promised to give the children of Israel. God told Moses that he might see

the land, but he could not enter it because of his disobedience at Meribah. And he was to die there in the mount.

Moses went up from the plains of Moab to the top of Pisgah, the highest peak of Mount Nebo, from whence he could see all the land that lay round about. And the Lord showed him the length and breadth of the land he had promised to the children of Israel, and pointed out all it beauties.

DEATH OF MOSES.

And Moses died there on Mount Nebo, and the Lord buried him, and nobody knows where his sepulchre is to this day. Although Moses was one hundred and twenty years old when he died, his eye was not dim, nor had he lost any of his manly strength. The children of Israel mourned his loss deeply, and there was never a prophet in Israel like Moses, who spoke with the Lord face to face.

CHAPTER XVII.

JOSHUA.

After the death of Moses, the Lord spoke to Joshua, the son of Nun, and told him that he was to lead the Israelites over the Jordan. And he said to him, As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee: I will not fail thee nor forsake thee. Be strong, therefore, and of good courage; be not afraid.

JOSHUA CHOSEN TO SUCCEED MOSES.

Joshua commanded the officers of the people to pass through the host and bid them prepare the food they would need; for in three days they would pass over the river Jordan and enter the land which God had given them.

Joshua had secretly sent out two spies to view the land of

Canaan; and they were to go as far as Jericho, and to bring back word of all they saw and heard. The spies went on their errand, and at night they came to the house of a woman named Rahab, and they lodged there. God put it in her heart to be kind to these strangers.

As soon as it came to the ears of the king of Jericho that men from the children of Israel had come in to spy out the

THE ESCAPE OF THE SPIES.

land, he sent at once to Rahab to have her give them up. But she had hid the two men on the roof of her house among some stalks of flax. And when the king's officers came to her she said that the men had been there but had gone away about the time of shutting the gate. Where they went, she said, she did not know, but told the officers if they made haste they would overtake them. So they went off toward the river Jordan, and shut the gate of the city after them.

As soon as the officers were out of sight, Rahab went up to the roof and told the spies that she knew that God had given them the land, and it was useless to fight against them.

She said to the spies, As I have been kind to you, be ye also kind to my father and mother, my brethren and my sisters, and save them from death. The men said that no harm should come to her or her people, if she told no one of their having been there. And when God gives us the land, they added, we will deal kindly and truly with thee. Then she let them down by a cord or rope through the window, for her house was part of the town wall. And she told them to go to the mountain, and hide there for three days, till the officers who had gone in pursuit of them returned, and afterward they might go on their way.

Before they left the spies told Rabab that when the children of Israel came into the land, she was to fasten the line of scarlet cord in the window through which they were let down, and bring all her family into the house with her. And so long as they stayed in the house they would be safe from all harm. But if she mentioned a word of this, the spies would not keep their word with her, and she and all in her house would surely be put to death.

She promised to do as they said, and bound the scarlet line in the window. The men went their way, and stayed in the mountain for three days, until those who were in pursuit of them returned to the city, and gave up the search. Then the spies came down the mountain, and went back to Joshua and told him of all that had taken place.

Joshua brought the children of Israel as far as the river Jordan, and then waited there for two or three days to get them in readiness to cross. And the officers went through the host, and told them when they saw the priests and Levites bearing the ark, they were all to leave their places and follow after it. By this they would know the way they were to go, for they had never passed this way before.

The Lord said to Joshua, This day will I exalt thee in the sight of all Israel, that they may know that, as I was with Moses, so I will be with thee. Command the priests who bear the ark to stand still in the river Jordan.

Joshua spoke to the children of Israel, and told them of the wonderful things that God meant to do for them. And he said, Behold, the ark of the covenant of the Lord of all the earth passeth over before you into Jordan. Now, therefore, take twelve men out of the tribes of Israel, one from every

PASSING THROUGH THE JORDAN.

tribe. And it shall come to pass, as soon as the priests who bear the ark shall rest the soles of their feet in the Jordan, the waters will part and stand up in a heap. Jordan overflowed its banks at this season of the year, and the river was very high.

When they that bore the ark came to the river Jordan, and as soon as the feet of the priests touched the edge of the swollen stream, the waters were turned back, and the priests stood still until all the children of Israel had crossed over into the land of Canaan.

After the people had all gone over the priests followed them, and then the waters flowed into the river again, filling it up as it was before.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERICHO.

The children of Israel encamped at Gilgal, and ate of the food they had brought with them, and of the corn that grew in the land. There was no need for the manna to fall any more, as they were now in a land where there was plenty of food.

After this Joshua went out from the camp and came near to the city of Jericho. And behold there was a man standing

there with a drawn sword in his hand. Joshua said to him, Art thou for us or for our enemies? The man said that he had come to be the captain of the children of Israel, to show them how to fight, and to lead them unto victory.

Then Joshua bowed down, and worshipped him, for he knew it was the Lord.

Now Jericho was straitly shut up, because of the children of Israel: none went out and none came in.

And the Lord said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and the king thereof, and the mighty men of valor. And ye shall compass the city, all ye men of war, and go round about the city once: thus shalt thou do six days. And seven priests shall bear before the ark seven trumpets of rams' horns: and the seventh day ye shall compass the city seven times, and the priests shall blow with the trumpets. And it shall come to pass, that when they make a long blast with the ram's horn, and when ye hear the sound of the trumpet, all the people shall shout with a great shout: and the wall of the city shall fall down flat, and the people shall ascend up every man straight before him.

Joshua told the people what the Lord had commanded them to do. And he charged them not to shout, nor to make any loud noise, until he gave them the word. Then they were to shout with all their might.

So the seven priests with the seven trumpets marched in front of the ark, and behind it followed the armed men. And they marched round the city once each day for six days, returning to the camp and remaining quietly there. On the seventh day they rose early, and went out and marched seven times around the city. And the seventh time, the priests blew more loudly on their trumpets, and Joshua called out to the people, Shout, for the Lord hath given you the city!

So the people shouted, and the wall fell down, and the Israelites marched in and took the city, and laid it waste with fire and sword. Only Rahab and her kindred were left alive, and they were taken to a safe place near the camp of the Israelites.

God had commanded the children of Israel not to touch the ark under penalty of death. This meant they were to do no

sin, but to keep all the laws of God, and to lead pure and holy lives. And if one man committed a sin, all the children of Israel were to be held guilty.

Now when Jericho was being burned up, one of the Israelites, a man named Achan, saved from the flames a lump of gold, a quantity of silver, and a costly robe, and hid them in his tent, thinking no one would discover his crime. But the eye of God was upon him, and he could not escape being found out.

Joshua sent two or three thousand men from Jericho to Ai, to conquer that place; but the men of Ai killed thirty-six of the Israelites, and put the rest to flight. This defeat was a great blow to Joshua, and he and the elders of Israel put dust on their heads as a token of their grief and shame.

The Lord made it known to Joshua that Israel had sinned; that some one in their midst had kept back some of the treasures of Canaan that were to be burned by fire. For the Canaanites were worshippers of idols, and the Israelites were not to covet their goods.

God told Joshua that the children of Israel should win no victories over their enemies until these spoils of war were taken out of the camp and burned up. And he told Joshua how to find the man who had committed the crime, and what was to be done with him and his household.

So Joshua called up the children of Israel according to their tribes, and questioned them. And Achan the son of Carmi, of the tribe of Judah, confessed the crime, and told Joshua what he had done.

And Joshua sent messengers to his tent, and they brought the silver and gold and costly garments, and spread them out before him. And Joshua said, Why hast thou troubled us? The Lord shall trouble thee this day.

And the Israelites took Achan, and his family to a valley north of Jericho, and stoned them to death. After which they and everything belonging to them were burned, and a heap of stones was raised over the ashes. The place was called the valley of Achor from that day.

The Lord told Joshua not to be afraid, but to go to war

against the people of Ai, and he would deliver the city into his hands, and he was to destroy it as he did Jericho.

Joshua did as the Lord commanded; and he chose out thirty thousand men and sent them away by night to lie in wait, or in ambush, beyond the city. The next morning Joshua set out with about five thousand men, and took his stand in front of the city. When the king of Ai saw these men, he thought

JOSHUA CONQUERS AI.

they had all come, and went out to fight against them and to drive them from the land. All the people in Ai gave chase, and Joshua and his five thousand fled as if beaten in battle. In this way the people were drawn far from the city, and those that were hidden back of the city went in and set it on fire.

The men of Ai looked back and, behold, the smoke of

their city was up to heaven, and they had no power to flee this way or that.

And thou shalt do to Ai and her king, as thou didst unto Jericho and her king: only the spoil thereof, and the cattle thereof, shall ye take for a prey unto yourselves: lay thee an ambush for the city behind it.

Then Joshua built an altar unto the Lord on Mount Ebal, and sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings upon it. Afterwards he wrote upon the stones the words of God's law, and read them to all the people, as Moses had commanded the children of Israel.

And it came to pass, when all the kings which were on this side Jordan, in the hills, and in the valleys, and in all the coasts of the great sea over against Lebanon, the Hittite, and the Amorite, the Canaanite, the Perizzite, the Hivite, and the Jebusite heard thereof; that they gathered themselves together, to fight with Joshua and with Israel, with one accord.

And when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done unto Jericho and to Ai, they acted with more cunning. They went to Joshua, putting on old clothes and worn-out shoes, and having dry and mouldy bread with them, to pretend that they had come from a far distant country, and had been a long time on the road.

And they said unto Joshua, We are thy servants. And Jeshua said unto them, Who are ye? and from whence come ye?

And they said unto him, From a very far country thy servants are come, because in the name of the Lord thy God: for we have heard the fame of him, and all that he did in Egypt. Therefore our elders sent us to ask you to make an alliance with them and to be our friends.

And Joshua called for them, and he spake unto them saying, Wherefore have ye beguiled us, saying, We are very far from you; when ye dwell among us?

Now therefore ye are cursed, and there shall none of you be freed from being bondmen, and hewers of wood and drawers of water for the house of my God.

And Joshua made them that day hewers of wood and draw-

ers of water for the congregation and for the altar of the Lord, even unto this day, in the place which he should choose.

There was living at Jerusalem about this time a heathen king, who became alarmed at the victories of Joshua, and, moved by fear and jealousy, he sent for four other kings of Canaan to consult with them. They came up to the city where the Gibeonites lived who had deceived Joshua and the Israelites, but whose lives had been spared because Joshua made peace with them.

Come up unto me, said the king of Jerusalem to the four other kings, and help me, that we may smite Gibeon; for it hath made peace with Joshua and with the children of Israel.

Then the men living at Gibeon, who wore the old shoes and old garments, and carried with them the dry and mouldy bread when they deceived Joshua—these men were greatly afraid, and did not know what would become of them, and they sent unto Joshua, the great soldier of God, who was then staying at a place called Gilgal.

Come up to us quickly, they said, and save us, and help us, for all the kings of the Amorites that dwell in the mountains are gathered against us.

So Joshua ascended from Gilgal, he and all the people of war, and all the mighty men of valor. And the Lord said unto Joshua, Fear them not, for I have delivered them into thy hand; there shall not a man of them stand before thee.

Joshua therefore came unto them suddenly, and went up from Gilgal all night.

And the Lord gave Joshua and the men of war that were with him victory over their enemies, and they were slain with a great slaughter at Gibeon, and chased along the way that goeth up to Beth-horon, because they were very wicked people.

The Lord sent a great hailstorm from heaven upon them, and a great many more died in the awful storm than were slain with the sword.

It was getting late in the day, and Joshua, desiring to end the battle before dark, looked up into the sky and commanded the sun to stand still. So the sun stood still in the midst of heaven, and hasted not to go down about a whole day.

GIBEONITES SHOW THEIR MOULDY BREAD TO JOSHUA.

And there was no day like that before it or after it, that the Lord hearkened unto the voice of a man; for the Lord fought for Israel.

The five wicked kings had, in the meantime, hid themselves in a cave, and the soldiers of Joshua knowing this, had been told to roll great stones upon the mouth of the cave, until all the enemies of God should be destroyed.

JOSHUA COMMANDING THE SUN TO STAND STILL.

Then said Joshua, Open the mouth of the cave, and bring out those five kings unto me out of the cave.

And Joshua called for all the men of Israel, and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings. And Joshua said unto them, Fear not, nor be dismayed, be strong and of a good courage, for thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies against whom ye fight.

And afterward Joshua slew them and hanged them on five trees, and at the time of the going down of the sun they were taken down and cast into the cave wherein they had been hid, and great stones were placed against the mouth of the cave.

Joshua fought with thirty-one kings in all, and destroyed their cities and all the inhabitants. Some of these kings were

THE FIVE KINGS IN THE CAVE.

very rich, and were able to use chariots and horses. These chariots were armed on the side with iron scythes, and were enough to strike terror to the hearts of the Israelites, who had to fight on foot. But the Lord was with Joshua, and gave him such skill that he took his enemies by storm, and swept them from the field.

But he was now an old man, too old to go to war, and there remained many cities yet to be conquered. And the Lord

commanded him to divide the land of Canaan, and to give to each tribe a certain portion. And Joshua did so. And he also chose places that should be called Cities of Refuge. There were six cities in all. Three were on the east and three on the west side of the river Jordan. It was a crime to kill any one. And murderers were to be put to death. But one might kill another by accident, and then if he fled to a city of refuge he would be safe from the avenger of blood.

God gave the children of Israel many years of rest from their enemies. And when Joshua felt that he had not much longer to live, he spoke to the children of Israel, and reminded them of all that God had done for them. He told them to be brave, and trust in God, for He would be with them and give them victory. But if they bowed down before idols God would punish them severely. The people said, The Lord our God we will serve, and his voice we will obey.

Joshua wrote these words in a book, and then took a great stone and set it up under an oak tree that was by the sanctuary of the Lord. This stone was to remind them of the vow they had made to love and serve the only true God.

Joshua was one hundred and ten years old when he died, and they buried him in Mount Ephraim.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE JUDGES OF ISRAEL—DEBORAH AND BARAK—JAEL AND SISERA—GIDEON—JEPHTHAH'S RASH VOW—SAMSON.

After the death of Joshua, the children of Israel asked the Lord who should lead them out now to fight the Canaanites. The Lord said that Judah should go with them, and take possession of the land. Judah took his brother Simeon with him, and they fought the Canaanites and the Perizzites, and they slew at Bezek ten thousand men. And on other occasions they distinguished themselves as true warriors of God.

The tribe of Ephraim also fought bravely and captured the town of Luz, afterwards called Bethel. The Israelites, however, soon forgot the commands of the law, and instead of driving the wicked inhabitants out of the land of Canaan were tempted to make leagues or alliances with them, then to intermarry with them, and then to attend their idolatrous festivals, and then to worship false gods themselves and to practice some of the worst crimes.

Then the anger of the Lord was hot against Israel, and he sold them into the hand of a heathen king, whom they were obliged to serve for eight years.

They then cried unto the Lord, and he raised up a deliverer, and this deliverer fought for them and overcame the heathen king.

The children of Israel sinned again against the Lord, and the Lord sent another heathen king against them, and this king smote them and took from them the city of palm trees.

The children of Israel were obliged to serve this king eighteen years.

They then cried again to the Lord for help, and he heard their cry, and sent them another deliverer, who killed their enemy, and after this they had rest and quiet during a period of eighty years.

And the children of Israel again did evil in the sight of the Lord, and the Lord sold them into the hand of Jabin, king of Canaan. This king had nine hundred chariots of iron, and for twenty years he greatly oppressed the children of Israel, who again repented of their wicked ways, and God now sent them a very remarkable woman to deliver them.

This woman's name was Deborah. She lived in Mount Ephraim, between Ramah and Bethel, and an old palm tree grew near her house. She was a prophetess as well as a judge, and could tell beforehand what was to take place. The Israelites were in bondage to the Canaanites, and would not make an effort to set themselves free.

Therefore Deborah sent for Barak, of the tribe of Naphtali, to lead ten thousand of the children of Israel to fight against the Canaanitish king Jabin, whose great army was com-

manded by Sisera. She told him that God would surely give him the victory, and deliver Sisera into his hands.

Barak said, If thou wilt go with me, then will I go; but if thou wilt not go with me, then will I not go. Deborah consented to go with him, but told Barak that he should win no honor in the battle, for the Lord would deliver Sisera into the hands of a woman.

So Barak went up toward Mount Tabor with ten thousand men: and Deborah went with him.

Sisera gathered together his nine hundred chariots of iron and all his men of war, and went as far as the river Kishon to fight the Israelites. And Deborah said to Barak, Up; for this is the day the Lord will deliver Sisera into thine hand. So Barak went down from Mount Tabor with his ten thousand men, and the Lord gave them the victory over Sisera, and they slew all of his men with the sword. But Sisera himself escaped, and ran to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, who was friendly to King Jabin.

Jael welcomed Sisera to her tent, and gave him a bed to lie in, and covered him over with a blanket. He said to her, Give me, I pray thee, a little water to drink, for I am thirsty. And she opened a bottle of milk, and gave him drink. Then he said to her, Stand in the door of the tent, and if any one come and inquire if there is a man in here, tell them No.

Sisera was very weary and soon fell asleep, and when Jael was sure that he slept she took a large tent-nail in one hand and a hammer in the other, and went in very softly. And she drove the nail through Sisera's temples and fastened it into the ground.

Barak had given chase to Sisera, and as he drew near Jael's tent Jael went out to meet him, and said, Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest. And when he came into her tent, there lay the mighty Sisera dead, with the nail in his temples.

So the Lord was with the children of Israel that day, and helped them to overcome Jabin and to drive him out of the land. Then Deborah and Barak sang a song of thanksgiving and of praise to the Lord. And for forty years there was peace in the land.

But the children of Israel fell into evil ways again, and to punish them God let them fall into the hands of the Midianites, who treated them very cruelly for seven long years. The Israelites hid themselves in dens and caves in the mountains and built strongholds to protect themselves from their enemies, who swept through the land like an army of grasshoppers, and devoured everything before them. The Israelites

SISERA AND JAEL.

were in danger of starving to death, and they prayed God to deliver them from the Midianites.

Joash and his son Gideon were threshing wheat by the wine-press, which hid them from the Midianites. And the angel of the Lord came and said to Gideon, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor. And Gideon said unto him, O my Lord, if the Lord be with me, why then has all this befallen us?

The Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy strength, and thou shalt save Israel from the Midianites; for I have sent thee. Gideon said, How can I save Israel? My family is a poor one, and I am the least in my father's house. The Lord said, I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man.

Gideon asked for a sign that he might know that the Lord spoke to him. And he said, I will put a fleece of wool on the floor, and if the dew is on the fleece only, and the earth all around is dry, then shall I know that thou wilt save Israel by my hand as thou hast said.

Gideon rose early in the morning, and squeezed the fleece together, and wrung a bowlful of water out of it. Still he was not satisfied, and he said, Be not angry with me, I pray thee, and let me prove thee once more with the fleece. Let the fleece only be dry, and the earth all around wet with the dew. And the next morning Gideon found the fleece quite dry, and there was dew on all the ground.

Then Gideon gathered his army together, and there was a mighty host ready to fight against the Midianites. But the Lord said if so many went they would be proud, and boast that in their own strength they won the day. So he commanded Gideon to tell all those who trembled and were afraid to return to their homes. And twenty-two thousand men did so. And there were still ten thousand left.

The Lord said to Gideon, There are yet too many. Bring them down to the water, and I will try them there. And every one that lappeth with his tongue, like a dog, thou shalt set off by himself; likewise every one that bends on his knees to drink.

And those that lapped, putting their hand to their mouth, were three hundred men; but all the rest bowed down upon their knees to drink the water. And the Lord said to Gideon, By the three hundred men that lapped will I save you, and deliver the Midianites into your hands. Let all the other people go; every man to his place. So Gideon divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he gave to each man a trumpet, and pitcher with a firebrand inside of it. And he said to them, When I blow on the trumpet, then

shall ye all do the same, and cry out, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.

When they stood in front of the camp of the Midianites, the men blew their trumpets and broke their pitchers, and with the firebrands in their left hands and the trumpets in their right, they cried out, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon. And the hosts of Midian fled in great fear before

VICTORY OF GIDEON OVER THE MIDIANITES.

them. And Gideon and his men came to the Jordan, and passed over, faint, yet pursuing, and took the two kings of Midian prisoners, and drove the rest of the people out of their land.

Gideon lived to a good old age. And as soon as he was dead the children of Israel returned to their wicked ways, and remembered not the Lord who had delivered them out of the hands of their enemies on every side. Nor did they show

any kindness to the descendants of Gideon, in return for the good deeds that he had done.

In the course of time the Ammonites made war against Israel. And the children of Israel sent for a man named Jephthah, a skilful warrior, to be their captain, and lead them forth to battle.

Jephthah said he would go with them if they would promise to make him a prince and a ruler in the land. This they said they would do, and Jephthah took his place as captain at the head of the army of Israel. But before he left his home in Mizpeh, Jephthah vowed a vow to the Lord, and said, If thou wilt deliver the children of Ammon into my hands, I will offer up as a burnt offering whatever comes out of my house to meet me, when I return to my home in peace.

Jephthah fought against the Ammonites and overthrew them, and afterwards departed for his home in Mizpeh. As he drew near his house, the one that came forth to meet him was his own daughter, his only child, in whom his heart was bound up. She, with her fair companions, came to meet the returning hero, with timbrels in hand and with songs and dances.

As soon as Jephthah saw her, he rent his robes, and cried out, Alas my daughter! thou hast brought me very low, for I have given my word to the Lord, and cannot take it back. Nor did she ask it. She replied that he must do to her according as he had promised the Lord, who had given him the victory. Only, she said, let me alone for two months, that I may go up and down the mountains, I and my companions, and lament my fate.

Jephthah granted her request, and at the end of two months she came back to her father, and he sacrificed her according to the vow he had made. And it became a custom for the daughters of Israel to mourn over the daughter of Jephthah for four days in every year. And Jephthah judged Israel for six years, and when he died he was buried in one of the cities of Gilead.

After a number of years the Israelites fell into the hands of the Philistines.

Now there was among the Israelites a man named Manoah,

of the tribe of Dan. And he had a wife, but no children. And the angel of the Lord came to Manoah's wife one day, and said to her, Drink not wine nor strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing, for thou shalt bear a son, and no razor shall

JEPHTHAH AND HIS DAUGHTER.

come on his head; for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God from his birth. And he shall deliver Israel from the Philistines.

The woman came to her husband, and told him that she had seen an angel of God, and what he had said to her, Ma-

noah prayed, and said, O my Lord, let the man of God whom thou didst send come again to us and teach us how to bring up the child that shall be born to us.

God heard Manoah's prayer, and the man came again to the woman as she sat in the field. And she ran and called her husband. And Manoah came to the man and asked him if he was the man that spoke to his wife. And he said he was. Then Manoah asked him how they were to bring up the child, and what was to be his special work.

The man said, Of all that I told the woman let her beware. She must not eat of anything that cometh from the vine, neither let her drink wine or strong drink, nor eat any unclean thing. All that I have commanded her, let her observe.

Manoah asked him to remain until they had prepared some food for him to eat. But the angel of the Lord said to Manoah, Though thou detain me, I will not eat of thy bread; and if thou wilt offer a burnt offering, thou must offer it to the Lord. For Manoah knew not that he was an angel of the Lord.

Manoah asked him his name, and the angel of the Lord said to him, Why askest thou thus after my name, seeing it is secret? that is, a mystery. So Manoah took a kid with a meat offering, and offered it upon a rock to the Lord, and the angel wrought wonders, and Manoah and his wife looked on. For when the flame went up toward heaven from the altar, the angel ascended in the flame; and when Manoah and his wife saw it, they bowed down with their faces to the ground.

The angel did not appear again to Manoah and his wife, and then Manoah knew that he was an angel of the Lord. And Manoah said to his wife, We shall surely die, because we have seen God. But his wife, who had greater faith, encouraged him to believe that the Lord looked on them with favor.

In due time, Manoah's wife bore a son, and called his name Samson. And the child grew, and the Lord blessed him. When he was a young man he went down to Timnath among the Philistines, and there he fell in love with a young woman whom he desired to marry. And he besought his father and mother to get her for him. His parents begged him to find a

wife among his own people, but none of the daughters of Israel pleased him so much as the woman of Timnath. Wherefore, seeing that his heart was set upon it, they gave their consent to the marriage and went down with him to Timnath. On the way a young lion came out and roared at Samson; and he tore him apart as easily as he would a young kid. But his parents were at some distance, and he did not tell them what he had done.

SAMSON AND THE LION.

And he went down and talked with the woman; and she pleased Samson well.

And after a time he returned to take her, and he turned aside to see the carcass of the lion; and behold, there was a swarm of bees and honey in the carcass of the lion.

And he took thereof in his hands, and went on eating, and came to his father and mother, and he gave them, and they

did eat: but he told not them that he had taken the honey out of the carcass of the lion.

When it came time for Samson to celebrate his marriage feast the Philistines brought him thirty young men to keep him company. Samson gave them a riddle, and said if they found it out within the seven days he would give each of them a sheet and a linen garment. But if they failed to find it out, they were to give him thirty sheets and thirty garments. They said to him, Let us hear thy riddle. And Samson said to them, Out of the eater came forth meat, and out of the strong came forth sweetness. And at the end of three days they had not found out the riddle.

On the seventh day they said to Samson's wife, Persuade thy husband to explain to us the riddle, or we will burn thee and thy father's house with fire. And they accused her of wanting to rob them in order to enrich her husband.

Samson's wife wept before him, and said, Thou dost but hate me, and lovest me not: thou hast put forth a riddle unto the children of my people and hast not told it to me. He said, I have not told it to my father or mother, and shall I tell it to thee? Still she wept so that he was grieved, and he told her the answer to the riddle, and she told it to the thirty Philistines. And on the seventh day, when Samson called for the answer to the riddle, the young men said, What is sweeter than honey, and what is stronger than a lion? They pretended they had found it out themselves. But Samson knew that his wife had told them; and he was angry, and went back to his father's house.

The time had now come for Samson to show forth his strength, and to begin the work of deliverance. During the wheat harvest Samson went to visit his wife, and took with him a kid on which to feast with her and her friends.

But he found that his wife had been given to another, and this made him very angry. And Samson caught three hundred foxes and tied them tail to tail, and put a firebrand between the two tails. And he let them go among the cornfields and vineyards of the Philistines, and the shocks of corn, and the corn that was standing, and the vineyards and olive trees were all burned up.

Then the Philistines said, Who hath done this? And they answered, Samson the son-in-law of the Timnite, because his wife had been taken from him. And the Philistines came up and burnt her and her father with fire.

Samson said that he would avenge himself for this deed;

SAMSON SLAYING THE PHILISTINES.

and then if they let him alone he would harm them no more. And he wrestled with them, and threw them down, and trod them to death, and afterwards went and dwelt alone on the top of the rock Etam.

Then the Philistines went up and encamped in Judah. And the men of Judah said, Why are ye come up against us?

And they answered, To bind Samson are we come. To do to him as he hath done to us.

Then three thousand men of Judah went to the rock Etam, and said to Samson, Knowest thou that the Philistines are rulers over us? What is this that thou hast done to us? And he said to them, As they did unto me, so have I done to them.

And they said to him, We are come down to bind thee, that we may deliver thee into the hands of the Philistines. And Samson said, Swear that ye will not kill me yourselves. They said they would not kill him, but would bind him fast. And they bound him with two new cords, and brought him from the rock.

When he came to Lehi, the Philistines shouted in mockery, and God gave Samson such strength that he broke the cords from his arms as easily as if they had been burnt flax. And he took up the jaw-bone of an ass, and with it slew a thousand men. Then he threw the jaw-bone out of his hand, and called the place Ramath-lehi.

Soon he grew very thirsty and so weak that he feared he might fall into the hands of the Philistines. And he thanked God for his deliverance, and prayed for relief. And God opened a spring of water close at hand, and when Samson had drunk of the water his strength came to him again.

And it was told the Gazites, saying, Samson is come hither. And they compassed him in, and laid wait for him all night in the gate of the city, and were quiet all the night, saying, In the morning when it is day we shall kill him.

And Samson lay till midnight, and arose at midnight, and took the doors of the gate of the city, and the two posts, and went away with them, bar and all, and put them upon his shoulders, and carried them up to the top of an hill that is before Hebron.

Samson was a Nazarite; and the Nazarites were people who bound themselves by a vow not to touch wine or strong drink, and not to cut their hair. Samson's hair had grown long, and his mother was warned by the angel of God never to cut it, for he was chosen a Nazarite.

And it came to pass afterward, that he loved a woman in the valley of Sorek, whose name was Delilah.

And the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and said

SAMSON AND DELILAH.

unto her, Entice him, and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may prevail against him, that we may bind him to afflict him: and we will give thee every one of us eleven hundred pieces of silver.

And Delilah said to Samson, Tell me I pray thee, wherein thy great strength lieth, and wherewith thou mightest be bound to afflict thee.

And Samson said unto her, If they bind me with seven green withs, that were never dried, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

Then the lords of the Philistines brought up to her seven green withs, which had not been dried, and she bound him with them.

(Now there were men laying in wait, abiding with her in the chamber.) And she said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he brake the withs as a thread of tow is broken when it toucheth the fire. So his strength was not known.

And Delilah said unto Samson, Behold, thou hast mocked me and told me lies: now tell me, I pray thee, wherewith thou mightest be bound.

And he said unto her, If they bind me fast with new ropes that never were occupied, then shall I be weak, and be as another man.

Delilah therefore took new ropes, and bound him therewith, and said unto him, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. (And there were liers in wait abiding in the chamber.) And he brake them from off his arms like a thread.

And Delilah said unto Samson, Hitherto thou hast mocked me, and told me lies: tell me wherewith thou mightest be bound. And he said unto her, If thou weavest the seven locks of my head with the web.

And she fastened it with a pin and said unto him. The Philistines be upon, thee Samson. And he awakened out of his sleep and went away with the pin of the beam, and with the web.

Delilah was greatly provoked at Samson for deceiving her in this way and at last she prevailed upon him to tell her his secret. She pressed him daily with her words, and urged him so that his soul was vexed unto death. He said unto her, There hath not come a razor upon my head, for I have been a Nazarite unto God from my birth; if I be shaven, then my strength will go from me, and I shall become weak like any other man.

When Delilah saw that he told her all his heart she sent for the lords of the Philistines, saying, Come up this once, for he hath showed me all his heart.

Then the lords of the Philistines came up unto her, and brought money in their hand. And she made Samson sleep; and she called for a man who shaved off the seven beautiful locks of hair, and she afflicted him, and the strength went away from Samson.

TREACHERY OF DELILAH.

And Delilah said, The Philistines be upon thee, Samson. And he awoke out of his sleep, and said, I will go out as at other times, and shake myself, but he knew not that the Lord had departed from him.

But the Philistines took him, and put out his eyes, and brought him down to Gaza, and bound him with fetters of brass, and made him grind in the prison-house.

Now the Philistines were worshippers of idols, and the name of their chief god was Dagon. And they had built a beautiful temple for their god, and they appointed a festival in honor of Dagon and to celebrate their victory over Samson and the God of Israel. A great crowd of men and women filled the temple, and all were loud in their praises of Dagon who had delivered Samson into their hands.

Being in festive mood, they said, Call for Samson that he may make sport for us. And they brought Samson out of the prison-house and set him between two pillars, that they might mock at him and enjoy his misery. And Samson asked the lad that held him by the hand to let him feel the pillars that he might lean against them.

Now the main floor of the temple was not only crowded with people, but there were about three thousand men and women on the roof looking down to see the others making sport of Samson. And Samson prayed God to give him strength that he might be at once avenged for the loss of his eyes.

And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars of the house—one with his right hand, and the other with his left. And he said, Let me die with the Philistines. And he bowed himself with all his might, and the house fell upon all those that were gathered therein. And Samson killed more people at his death than he had killed during the whole of his life. Then his friends came and took him away, and buried him between Zorah and Eshtaol, in the burying-place of Manoah, his father. And Samson had judged Israel twenty years.

CHAPTER XIX.

RUTH.

In the days when the judges ruled in Israel, there came a great famine in the land. And a man named Elimelech left Bethelem-Judah and went to live in the country of Moab. And he took his wife Naomi and his two sons with him.

Elimelech died soon after he came to the land Moab, and Naomi was left a widow. Her two sons, Mahlon and Chilion married Moabitish women; the name of one was Orpah, and the name of the other Ruth. In less than ten years the two sons died, and Naomi made up her mind to leave the land of Moab and return to Canaan, for she had heard that there was plenty of food there.

RUTH AND NAOMI.

When she set out to return to the land of Judah, to whose tribe she belonged, her two daughters-in-law went with her, for they were very fond of her. But Naomi begged them to return to their own mothers, and said, May the Lord repay you for your kindness to me and to my dead sons. And with many kind wishes she kissed them, and they embraced each other.

Orpah and Ruth were still loath to leave Naomi, and clung

to her most affectionately. She urged them to return to their relatives and friends, for if they went with her they would have to endure great poverty and hardship.

Orpah decided at last that she would return, and parted affectionately from her mother-in-law. Naomi begged Ruth

RUTH.

to follow her sister-in-law. But Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to cease following thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge. Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God. Where thou diest I will die, and there will I be buried. The Lord

do so to me and more also (that is, make my afflictions even greater than yours) if aught but death part thee and me.

When Naomi saw that Ruth was determined to go with her, she said no more, and the two walked on until they came to Bethlehem, where Naomi had formerly lived. As soon as they entered the place all her old friends gathered about her and said, Is this Naomi?

She said to them, Call me not Naomi (which means *pleasant*), but call me Mara (which means *bitter*), for the Lord hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty. When she went away she had a husband and children; but now she returned alone.

Naomi and Ruth returned to Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest. And Ruth begged that she might go and glean in the field, for she looked forward to a life of hard work and mean fare. Naomi said, Go, my daughter. And Ruth followed after the reapers and picked up the grain they left behind for the poor to gather.

Now it happened that the field where Ruth gleaned belonged to a rich man named Boaz, who was related to Elimelech. When Boaz came where his reapers were he said to them, The Lord be with you. They answered him, The Lord bless thee. And when Boaz saw Ruth he asked who she was. And the chief servant who was set over the reapers told him that she was the young woman who came from Moab with Naomi. She begged that she might glean after the reapers, he said, and we allowed her to do so, and she hath kept on gleaning from the morning until now.

Then Boaz showed kindness to Ruth, and told her to go to no other field, but to glean in his, for he had told his young men to do her no harm. And when she was thirsty she was to go to the vessels the young men had filled, and drink.

Then she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?

And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been showed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother-in-law

since the death of thine husband : and how thou hast left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest not heretofore.

The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust.

And Boaz told her to eat with the reapers. So she ate with

RUTH AND BOAZ.

the reapers of bread dipped in vinegar, and Boaz handed her the parched corn, and she ate as much as she desired. Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall some handfuls of grain on purpose for her.

So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out the barley she had gathered. And when Naomi saw what she had brought, she blessed Ruth, and asked her where she had

gleaned, and who had been so kind to her. Ruth said the man's name was Boaz.

And Ruth told Naomi that Boaz had asked her to come back and glean in his field as long as the barley and wheat harvest lasted; and she did as he told her.

Then Naomi said to Ruth, Boaz winnoweth barley to-night in the threshing-floor. The threshing-floor was a large circle of level ground, prepared for use by beating the earth until it was hard as a floor. The sheaves were brought in from the field and spread out upon this floor; and the grain was trodden out by oxen, cows, and young cattle. Then it was tossed up in the air with pitchforks, and the wind blew away the broken straw and chaff, and the barley or wheat fell to the ground.

Naomi had heard that Boaz was to thresh his barley that night, and she told Ruth to wash and anoint herself, and put her raiment on, and go down to the threshing-floor, and do as she had told her. And Ruth did as her mother-in-law said.

After the work was done, a feast was spread, and when Boaz had eaten and drunk enough he lay down to sleep with a thankful heart. When he was alone Ruth drew near him, saying, Thou art our near kinsman. And she asked him to be kind to her. Boaz said, May the Lord bless thee, my daughter. And he told her to fear not, for all the people of Bethlehem knew that she was a good woman. He said to her, Bring here thy veil and hold it out. And he poured into it six measures of barley, and she took it home with her. And when she showed it to Naomi, and told her all that had happened, Naomi told her to wait patiently and see what else Boaz would do.

After Ruth had left him, Boaz went up to the gate and sat down there. The gate was a place where the people met to learn the news of the day, and to talk with each other. The rulers came there to hold their court, to try those who had broken the laws, and to decide in what way they were to be punished. Goods were also bought and sold there, making it a kind of market-place; and there the priests spoke to the people and the prophets warned them.

And he took ten men of the elders, or chief men of the city,

and said to them, Sit ye down here. And they sat down. And he spoke to them and to all the people, and told them that he was going to marry Ruth, the daughter-in-law of Naomi. And he said, You are witnesses. They had heard him tell it, and could tell it to others. And the people and the elders said, We are witnesses; and they prayed that the Lord would bless Ruth, and make Boaz still more prosperous and famous in Bethlehem.

So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife. And Naomi was glad, for she loved Ruth as if she had been her own daughter. And God gave Boaz and Ruth a son, and Naomi took the child and laid it on her breast, and nursed it for them. And they named the child Obed.

CHAPTER XX.

JOB.

There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, who feared God and did no evil. He had seven sons and three daughters. He was very rich also; for he had seven thousand sheep, three thousand camels, five hundred yoke of oxen, five hundred asses, and many servants, and was the greatest of all the men who lived in that part of the world.

And his sons went and feasted in their houses, every one his day; and sent and called for their three sisters to eat and to drink with them.

And it was so, when the days of their feasting were gone about, that Job sent and sanctified them, and rose up early in the morning, and offered burnt offerings according to the number of them all: for Job said, It may be that my sons have sinned, and cursed God in their hearts. Thus did Job continually.

After Job had enjoyed the blessings of life for a number of years, God let troubles come upon him to see how he would

bear them, and if he would be good and patient and think that his heavenly Father knew what was best for him.

And there was a day when his sons and his daughters were eating and drinking wine in their eldest brother's house :

And there came a messenger unto Job, and said, The oxen were ploughing and the asses feeding beside them : and the Sabeans fell upon them, and took them away ; yea, they have slain the servants with the edge of the sword ; and I only am escaped alone to tell thee.

While he was yet speaking there came another, who said a great fire had come out of the sky, and burned up all the sheep and those who were taking care of them. And he was the only one left to tell the tale. While this man was speaking there came another, who said, Three bands of Chaldeans came and drove off the camels and slew the servants with the edge of the sword. And I am the only one left to tell thee. While he was yet speaking another came and said, While thy sons and daughters were eating and drinking in their eldest brother's house, there came a great wind that blew down the house and killed all that were in it. And I am the only one left to tell thee.

Then Job rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and bowed down before God and worshipped him. He said, I came into the world like a little child. I brought nothing with me; and when I die I can take nothing away. The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away ; blessed be the name of the Lord. In all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly.

After this God let sickness come upon Job, and boils broke out all over him, from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot. And he mourned and prayed continually. Then his wife, distressed by her husband's sufferings, said to him, Dost thou remain faithful? Curse God, and die ! Say evil things of God, even though he kill thee for doing it.

But Job said to her, Thou speakest like a foolish woman. After we have received so many good things from God, shall we not be willing to receive evil things? In all this Job did not sin with his lips.

Now Job had three friends, who, when they heard of his afflictions, came to mourn with and comfort him. Their

names were Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. But when they saw Job they did not know him, for he was greatly changed. And they wept and rent their clothes, and then sat down near him, but did not speak, for they saw that his grief was very great.

Now these friends thought that Job's troubles must have been sent upon him because of some evil he had done. So

JOB AND THE MESSENGERS.

after a while they spoke to him and said if he would repent of his sins God would forgive him.

But Job knew that he had not sinned, and he told his friends that their words did him more harm than good, for there was no comfort in them. Job knew that God had afflicted him for some good reason, and although now he seemed to stand at a distance and to frown upon him, Job felt in his

heart that when the trial time was over he should be brought forth pure as gold from the furnace.

He spoke beautifully of the wonders that God had created, and of his mighty power. He sends the snow and the rain, the frost, the cloud, the thunder and the lightning. Out of the south cometh the whirlwind, and cold out of the north. He teaches the wild beasts to hunt for their prey, and feeds the young birds that cry unto him. But, in order to set himself right with his friends, Job had shown some pride, and had spoken of God as he would have spoken of his equal.

And there came up a whirlwind. And the Lord spoke to Job out of the whirlwind, and asked him if he could do any of the wonderful things that God did, and if he thought himself as wise as the Creator of heaven and earth. Canst thou teach God? inquired the voice.

Job was ashamed, and could not speak for some time. He felt that he had no excuses to make, and finally confessed his sin to the Lord, and promised to submit to God's will, and make no more complaints.

The Lord spoke to Job again out of the whirlwind, and said, Shall not the judge of all the earth do right? and set forth the works and the wisdom of God in such a way that Job was humbled to the dust.

And he answered the Lord, and said, I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. He confessed that he had spoken of things he did not understand, and in a manner that called for punishment. Wherefore, he said, I hate myself, and repent in dust and ashes.

The Lord was angry with Job's three friends, and said that he would not forgive them unless they brought costly burnt offerings and asked Job to pray for them. So they brought sacrifices as the Lord commanded, and Job prayed for them, and their sins were forgiven.

After a time God removed Job's afflictions and his brothers, sisters, and acquaintances came to see him, and did eat bread with him in his house, and every man gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. And the Lord

blessed Job even more than he had done in the beginning of his life, and made him twice as rich. For now he had fourteen thousand sheep, six thousand camels, a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand asses.

JOB IN PROSPERITY.

He had also seven sons and three daughters. And in all the land there were no women so fair as the daughters of Job. After these things Job lived a hundred and forty years, and was a very old man when he died.

CHAPTER XXI.

JONAH.

We will now consider the history of a prophet who attempted to run away from the voice of God.

There was a very large city in Assyria called Nineveh. It was the capital of the empire. The people that lived in it were very wicked, and the Lord commanded Jonah, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me.

But Jonah did not want to go to Nineveh, and took a ship for Joppa, that he might get away from the presence of the Lord.

When he was on the sea, the Lord sent out a great wind, and there was a mighty tempest, so that the ship was likely to be broken. Sailors were frightened in the storm, and cried unto the gods, which they carried with them, for deliverance from death, and at the same time they threw overboard the cargo to save the ship.

And during all the confusion on board the ship Jonah lay in the cabin fast asleep. So the shipmaster came to him and said, What meanest thou, O sleeper? Arise, and call upon thy God, if it be that he will think of us and save us.

And the sailors said one to another, Come, and let us cast lots, that we may know for whose cause this evil has come upon us. It was a custom among the Jews and Gentiles to decide a case by casting lots. So they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah.

Then they said unto him, Tell us, we pray thee, for whose cause this evil has come upon us. What is thine occupation? Whence comest thou? What is thy country? and of what people art thou?

He said to them, I am an Hebrew, and I fear the Lord God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the land.

Then the men were exceedingly afraid, and said to him, Why hast thou done this? for Jonah had told them that he

fled from the presence of the Lord. And they said, What shall we do to thee that the sea may be calm for us? for the waves had become more and more tempestuous.

And he said to them, Take me up and throw me into the sea, for I know that on my account this great tempest has been

JONAH IN THE STORM.

sent upon you. Yet the men did not want to throw Jonah overboard, and they rowed hard and tried to bring their ship to land, but they could not, for the storm was so great. Finding their labors in vain, they prayed to God, and begged that they might not perish for taking away Jonah's life, nor be

held guilty of murder, since it was the Lord's will that they should do it.

So they took up Jonah and threw him overboard, and the storm ceased immediately. Then the men feared God, and offered sacrifices of thanksgiving unto him, and made vows to worship him at Jerusalem.

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And for three days and nights Jonah was inside the fish. And he spent the time in earnest prayer to God, and in humble and hearty confessions of his sin. And God heard him, and spake unto the fish, and it cast him up on the dry land. And after his deliverance Jonah praised God with a song of thanksgiving, and promised to sin no more.

And the Lord spoke to Jonah the second time, and commanded him to go to Nineveh and preach to the people as he had told him. And Jonah arose and went to Nineveh to do as the Lord told him.

Nineveh was so large a city that it would take a man three days to walk round it. When Jonah therefore had made one day's journey round it, he cried out, as the herald of God, that in forty days Nineveh should be destroyed.

When the preaching of Jonah was made known to the king, he was so alarmed that he threw off his royal robes and put on sackcloth and ashes, and ordered a strict fast to be kept. Not only were the people to go without anything to eat, but the very oxen and sheep were to have neither food nor water, so that their mournful cries might add to the general gloom.

Even the horses and mules were covered with sackcloth, and the people as with one voice cried to the God of Israel to have mercy on them, and spare the city. At the same time the king commanded them to turn from their sins, and to be more kind and just in their dealings with men.

And God saw that they were sorry for their sins, and tried to do right, and he had pity upon them and spared their lives.

This act of God's displeased Jonah, and he was very angry. And he found fault with God, and said, I knew that thou art a gracious God, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and wouldst not destroy Nineveh, and for that reason I fled to Tarshish. And he said, Therefore now, O Lord, kill me,

for it is better for me to die than to live. For Jonah was a proud man, and feared the disgrace of being called a false prophet. But the Lord dealt kindly with Jonah, and asked him, Doest thou well to be angry?

So Jonah went out of the city, and sat on the east side of the city, and there made him a booth, and sat under it in the shadow, till he might see what would become of the city.

And the Lord God prepared a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow over his head, to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad of the gourd.

But God caused a worm to destroy the root of the vine, so that the next morning it withered away. A sultry east wind added to the heat, and the sun beat upon Jonah's head so that he fainted, and wished again for death as the only way out of his misery.

God said to Jonah, Doest thou well to be angry? And he said, Yes, I do well to be angry, and to die of grief.

Then said God, Thou art angry because I destroyed the gourd which came up in a night and died in a night. And wouldst thou have me destroy Nineveh, that great city, where there are more than six score thousand persons, so young that they cannot discern between their right hand and their left?

Thus God taught Jonah how wicked he was in wishing Nineveh to be destroyed, because the people were not friendly to the Jews, and because he was afraid that he would be called a false prophet.

CHAPTER XXII.

SAMUEL—DAVID IS ANOINTED—DAVID PLAYS ON THE HARP BEFORE SAUL.

THERE was a great prophet in Israel whose name was Samuel, which means "asked of God." His mother so named him because she asked God for him, and God heard her prayer. His mother's name was Hannah, and she was the wife of Elkanah. She had no sons before Samuel was born, while

Peninah, Elkanah's other wife, had sons and daughters. Elkanah loved Hannah more than Peninah, and gave her richer presents than he gave to Peninah. Yet she was very unhappy, and often in tears. This family lived in Ramah, and every year Elkanah went to Shiloh to offer a sacrifice in the tabernacle, Hannah went with him.

And she came to the tabernacle in Shiloh, and prayed earnestly, and made a vow that if God would give her a son he should serve God, obey his parents, and drink no wine.

THE PRAYER OF HANNAH.

Eli was high priest in the tabernacle. He saw Hannah's lips moving, but could not tell what she said, for she spoke softly. Eli thought she had been drinking, and he said to her, How long wilt thou be drunken? Put away thy wine from thee.

Hannah said, No, my lord; I am a woman of a sorrowful spirit. I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have

poured out my soul before the Lord. Then Eli said, Go in peace, and may the Lord give thee what thou hast asked of him. Hannah was pleased at the high priest's words, and went away with a glad countenance. And she and her husband returned to Ramah.

HANNAH PRESENTS SAMUEL TO ELI.

And the Lord remembered Hannah, and gave her a son, which she called Samuel. After the birth of Samuel, Elkanah went again to Shiloh, but Hannah stayed at home till Samuel was weaned. And after that she said she would take him to

the tabernacle at Shiloh, because she had promised that he should serve the Lord in the tabernacle.

Elkanah said, Do what seemeth thee good; so she staid at home and took care of her child. When she had weaned him, she took him to Shiloh, and she and her husband offered a bullock to the Lord. Then they brought the child to Eli; and Hannah said to the high priest, O my lord, I am the woman that stood by thee here and prayed God to give me a child. He heard my prayer, and this is the child he gave me. Therefore I have brought him back to serve the Lord as long as he lives. So she left Samuel to stay with the high priest at the tabernacle.

Eli the high priest had two sons. Their names were Hophni and Phinehas. And they also were priests; but they were not good men like their father, and did not try to please God.

When a man brought a sacrifice it was the custom for the priests to burn only a part of it on the altar. They kept back some for themselves to eat, and gave the rest to the man that he might eat of it, and, if he chose, make a feast for his friends.

But the sons of Eli took more than their share of the sacrifice. And if any man said unto him, Let them not fail to burn the fat presently, and then take as much as thy soul desireth; then he would answer him, Nay; but thou shalt give it me now: and if not, I will take it by force.

But Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. His mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him when she came up with her husband to the yearly sacrifice. And Eli blessed Elkanah and his wife, and prayed that God would give them other children.

Notwithstanding the evil ways of Hophni and Phinehas, Elkanah and Hannah went to Shiloh year after year, to worship God and to visit with their son.

Now Eli was very old, and he heard of the evil deeds of his sons. And he said to them, Why do ye such things? But he did not punish them, as he should have done, nor shut them out of the tabernacle because they were not fit to be priests. So they kept on in their sins. And there came a man of God to Eli, with a message from the Lord.

The Lord was greatly provoked with Eli, and said to him, Why do you allow your sons to take more than their portion of the offerings? Because of this evil both thy sons shall die on the same day.

And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days.

SAMUEL.

And it came to pass at that time, when Eli was laid down in his place, and his eyes began to wax dim, that he could not see; and ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord, where the ark of God was, and Samuel was laid down to sleep; that the Lord called Samuel: and he an-

swered, Here am I. And he ran unto Eli, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. And he said, I called not; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

One night he lay down to sleep, and Ely lay down also. And Samuel heard a voice calling, Samuel. And he answered, Here am I. And he ran to Eli, for he thought it was his voice, and said, Here am I; for thou calledst me. Eli said, I did not call thee; lie down again. And he went and lay down.

And Samuel heard the voice again, and he arose and went to Eli and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me. Eli said, I did not call thee, my son; lie down again. Samuel heard the voice a third time, and arose and went to Eli, and said, Here am I, for thou didst call me. Then Eli knew that it was the Lord who had spoken to Samuel.

Therefore Eli told Samuel to lie down, and if he heard the voice again, to say, Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth. So Samuel went and lay down.

And the Lord came and called as at other times, Samuel, Samuel. And Samuel answered, Speak, for thy servant heareth. Then the Lord told Samuel that he was going to do a deed that would send a thrill of terror throughout Israel. He would punish Eli and his sons, because the sons had done wicked things, and Eli had not restrained them. He had cared more to please his sons than to please God. And now, though they should offer up sacrifices and burnt offerings, God would not forgive them or spare their lives. Samuel lay until morning, and then opened the doors of the house of the Lord. And Samuel feared to show Eli the vision. But Eli called Samuel to him, saying, What is the thing that the Lord hath said unto thee? I pray thee hide it not from me, or it will be worse for thee.

And Samuel told him every word, and hid nothing from him. And Eli said, It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth to him good.

And Samuel grew, and the Lord was with him and all Israel knew that Samuel was a prophet of the Lord.

Now the children of Israel were in camp at Ebenezer. And they set out to attack the Philistines, who were at Aphek. And the Philistines overcame them, and slew about

four thousand of their men. And when the people went back to the camp the elders of Israel said, Why hath the Lord allowed the Philistines to conquer us? Let us bring the ark down here from Shiloh that it may save us from our enemies.

So the people sent to Shiloh for the ark, and Hophni and

THE CAPTURE OF THE ARK.

Phinehas carried it down to the army. And when the ark was brought into the camp, it was received with a great shout of joy by all the people. They did not look upon the ark as a sign of the Lord's presence, but rather as a charm to drive away their enemies.

When the Philistines heard the noise, and learned that the

ark was in the camp of the Hebrews, they were afraid. They said, God is come into the camp. Woe unto us! for no such thing hath been done heretofore. Who shall deliver us out of the hand of these mighty gods?

Then the Philistines fought with all their might, and put the Israelites to flight, and killed thirty thousand of their men. And the ark was taken, and the two sons of Eli were slain.

DEATH OF ELI.

After the battle a man came to Shiloh, with his clothes rent, and signs of great grief upon him. And when he told the news in the city everybody cried out. Eli sat by the wayside, watching, for he trembled for the safety of the ark of God. He was ninety-eight years old, and almost blind. And when he heard the noise of the crying he said, What means this tumult? and the man came in and told him that Israel had been put to flight with great slaughter. And he

said, Thy two sons also are dead, and the ark of God is taken. When he mentioned the ark of God, Eli fell from his seat backward and broke his neck, for he was a heavy man. And he had judged Israel forty years.

The Philistines took the ark of God and set it in the temple of Dagon which was at Ashdod. And when they went into

THE RETURN OF THE ARK.

the temple the next morning, behold Dagon had fallen on his face in front of the ark. And they set him in his place again. And the next morning they found Dagon on the ground in front of the ark, and so broken to pieces that a new image had to be made. As long as the ark remained in the city, the people were visited with plagues of all sorts, and there was

much sickness and death. So the ark was sent from Ashdod to Ekron, and immediately that city was visited with a pestilence.

And the ark of God was in the country of the Philistines seven months, and they asked the priests and the diviners what they should do with it. They were told to send the ark back with an offering of gold. They were to take a new cart and fasten two cows to it, and then put the ark on the cart with the gold in a box beside it, and let the cows go which way they chose. And the men did so, and the cows went straight to Beth-shemesh, lowing as they went, and turning not to the right hand nor the left.

The men of Beth-shemesh were reaping wheat, and were rejoiced when they saw the ark. The cows went on with the cart until they came to a great stone in the field of a man named Joshua, and there they stood still.

There were many priests, descendants of Levi, dwelling at Beth-shemesh, and they came and took down the ark and the box of gold and placed them on the rock. And the men of Beth-shemesh offered sacrifices and burnt offerings before it. But some of the men of Beth-shemesh looked into the ark, and for that sin God punished them severely, and put a great many of them to death.

So the men of Beth-shemesh sent messengers to Kirjath-jearim to ask the people of that place to come down and get the ark. And it was brought to the house of Abinadab and remained there for twenty years. During that time the children of Israel grew careless and wicked, and were still in the power of the Philistines.

But Samuel went from house to house and told them that if they would put away idols and love God and serve him only, then would God deliver them from the Philistines. Then the children of Israel put away their idols and worshipped God only.

And Samuel told them to gather at Mizpeh and he would meet them there and pray for them. And they did so. And when the Philistines heard the children of Israel were at Mizpeh, they went out to fight them. And the children of Israel were afraid, and said to Samuel, Cease not to cry unto the

Lord for us, that he may save us from the Philistines. And Samuel prayed, and the Lord heard him. And while he was offering up the burnt offering the Philistines drew near; but the Lord sent thunder and lightning upon the Philistines, killed many of them, and put the rest to flight.

Then Samuel set up a stone at Mizpeh, and called it Ebenezer, saying, Hitherto hath the Lord helped us. And the Philistines troubled the Israelites no more, and gave back to them all the cities they had taken, and there was peace between the Israelites and the Amorites.

Samuel was a judge in Israel all the days of his life. He made his home at Ramah, where he built an altar to the Lord, but went from place to place to hold court and try cases.

When Samuel was old he made his sons judges over Israel. One was named Joel and the other Abiah. But they were not good men, like their father, and did many wicked things. And the elders of Israel came to Samuel and said, Give us a king to judge us.

Samuel was displeased at this request, and prayed unto the Lord.

The Lord told Samuel that the people did not want to get rid of him, but of God. And he commanded him to speak to the children of Israel, and to show them how they would be treated if they had a king to reign over them.

And Samuel did so, and told them that if they chose a king and found him a cruel tyrant, they need not cry out to God, for he would not hear them. But they paid no heed to Samuel, and said, We will have a king to reign over us, who will go out with us and help us fight our battles.

And the Lord told Samuel to give them the king they asked for.

Now there was among the children of Israel a man named Kish, a descendant of Benjamin. He had a son named Saul, a good and handsome young man, who stood head and shoulders above the rest of the people.

The asses of Kish, Saul's father, were lost; and Kish told Saul to take one of the servants with him and look for the asses. And they went a long distance, and not seeing anything of them, Saul said to his servant, Come, and let us re-

turn, lest my father should be so anxious about us as to forget all about the asses.

The man said to him, There is in this city a good and honorable man, who is also a prophet. Let us go to his house, and perchance he can tell us which way we ought to go. Saul said, What shall we take the man? for our bread is gone, and we have no present to give him.

The servant said that he had a small piece of money with which he would pay the prophet for showing them the way. Then Saul said, Come, let us go; and they went to the city where Samuel was.

As they came near the city they met some young women going out to draw water, and said to them, Is the seer here? The women said he was, and told them to make haste and they would meet him as he went up the hill to attend the feast to be held that day. And the two men went on toward the city.

Now the Lord had told Samuel that he would send a man to him that day whom he was to anoint as captain. For he was to save the children of Israel from the Philistines. And when Samuel saw Saul the Lord said to him, Behold the man whom I spake to thee of. He shall reign over my people.

Saul drew near to Samuel in the gate, and said, Tell me, I pray thee, where the seer's house is. Samuel said, I am the seer. Go with me to the high place, for you shall eat with me to-day, and to-morrow I will let you go. As for the asses that were lost three days ago, trouble not yourself about them, for they are found. So Saul did eat with Samuel that day. The next day, as they were going out of the city, Samuel said to Saul, Bid the servant pass on (and he passed on), but stand thou still a while that I may show thee what God hath commanded.

Then Samuel took a vial of oil and poured it upon Saul's head, and kissed him.

Then Saul went his way, and his heart was filled with love to God and a desire to speak his praise.

Afterwards Samuel called the people together to Mizpeh to choose their king, but Saul could not be found, and they asked the Lord where they should find their king; and the Lord

answered, He hath hid himself among the stuff. And they brought him out, and when he stood among the people he was taller than any of them. And Samuel said to the people, This is he whom the Lord hath chosen, and all the people shouted, God save the king.

Then Samuel told the people how they were to serve their

SAUL MADE KING OF ISRAEL.

king, and wrote down the laws in a book; then he sent the people away, and Saul also went home.

And Saul went toward his home, and many followed him; and he staid seven days at Gilgal, as Samuel had told him. But as Samuel came not to Gilgal at the time set, Saul offered burnt offerings and peace offerings; as soon as he had finished the burnt offering Samuel came, and Saul went out to meet him.

Samuel said, What hast thou done? Saul said, As thou didst not come within the seven days and the Philistines had gathered at Michmash, I offered a burnt offering lest they should attack me. Samuel told Saul that he had done wrong, for he had not obeyed the commandment of God, and he said that his kingdom should not last, but he would have to give way to some one who would do the Lord's will at all times.

Samuel went from Gilgal to Gibeah, and Saul numbered the people that were with him, and there were about six hundred men, and he and Jonathan his son, and this small army encamped also at Gibeah.

Now the Philistines would let none of the children of Israel learn to make tools for fear they might also make swords and spears; and when the Israelites wanted to sharpen their ploughshares or axes, they would have to go down among the Philistines. So in their battles the Israelites used bows, slings, and javelins, and none among them had a sword or spear except Saul and Jonathan.

The men usually fought behind shields, which were borne by servants who were called armor-bearers.

One day Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, Come, let us go over to the Philistines; but he said nothing to his father about it. His armor-bearer said to him, Do as thou wilt, and I will go with thee. Then said Jonathan, We will go over to these men and attack them, and if they say to us, Wait till we come to you, then we will stand still and not go up to them. But if they say, Come up to us, then we will go up, and it will be a sign that the Lord hath delivered them into our hand.

Now there was a sharp rock on each side of the deep cut over which Jonathan had to pass to reach the Philistines, and when he and his armor-bearer came in sight of the Philistines, the Philistines said, Behold the Hebrews come forth out of the holes where they had hid themselves. And they said to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, Come up to us; so Jonathan climbed up the rock, and his armor-bearer after him, and slew twenty of the Philistines. The whole army was seized with fear and fought among themselves, and an earthquake which took place at the same moment added to their terror.

JONATHAN CLIMBING THE PRECIPICE.

The watchmen of Saul's army saw the confusion in the camp of the Philistines, and told Saul of it, and when it was found that none were absent from the camp of Israel but Jonathan and his armor-bearer, the people were greatly surprised, and Saul determined to march against the enemy. All the men of Israel, when they heard that the Philistines fled, made haste to take part in the battle. They drove them as far as Beth-aren, and there the Philistines threw down their arms and fled as fast as they could toward their own country.

Saul kept up the wars against the Philistines, and when he saw any strong or brave man, placed him in his army. And Saul fought with the Amalekites, and took Agag their king prisoner. God had commanded that they should destroy all their enemies, and Saul should have obeyed him; so the Lord spoke to Samuel, and said that he repented having made Saul a king; this grieved Samuel so that he prayed to the Lord all night. The next morning Samuel went out to meet Saul, and found that he had gone to Gilgal to sacrifice to God with a sheep and oxen taken from the Amalekites. Samuel said, Why didst thou not obey the voice of the Lord and burn up all these spoils? To obey is better than sacrifice. Saul tried to excuse himself, but Samuel told him that because he had not obeyed the word of the Lord he could no longer reign over Israel. Saul said to Samuel, I have sinned because I feared the people; pardon me, and turn again with me that I may worship the Lord. Samuel said, I will not return with thee; and as he turned to go away, Saul laid hold of his robe and it was rent in twain, and Samuel said to him, The Lord hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbor of thine that is better than thou. And Samuel came no more to see Saul till the day of his death, yet he continued to mourn over him.

And the Lord said to Samuel, How long wilt thou mourn for Saul, seeing that I have rejected him? Fill thine horn with oil, and go to the house of Jesse the Bethlehemite, for I have found a king among his sons. Samuel said, How can I go? if Saul hear of it, he will kill me. The Lord told him to take an heifer with him, and say that he had come to sacrifice to the Lord.

And Samuel did so, and came to the house of Jesse, in the town of Bethlehem. Seven of Jesse's sons came in to greet Samuel, who looked at them, but felt in his heart that the Lord had chosen none of them to be king of Israel.

So he said to Jesse, Are all thy children here? Jesse answered that there was one, the youngest, in the field taking care

SAUL REJECTED BY GOD FOR HIS DISOBEDIENCE.

of the sheep. Samuel said, Send for him that he may sit down with us. And Jesse did so.

Now David was about eighteen or twenty years of age; and he had a bright face and clear complexion, and was pleasant to look at. And the Lord said, Arise, anoint him: for this is he. Then Samuel anointed David in the midst of his brethren, and afterwards returned to Ramah.

From this time an evil spirit seemed to possess Saul, and

his mind was greatly distressed. Some of his servants told him to find out a skilful player on the harp, and the music would drive away the evil spirit, and Saul would be cured.

DAVID ANOINTED BY SAMUEL.

Saul told them to find a man who could play the harp well, and to bring him to his house.

One of the servants said that a son of Jesse had great skill on the harp, and was brave, and wise, and of pleasant appearance.

Wherefore Saul sent for David, and he came and stood before the king. Saul became very fond of the young man, and liked to have him near him. And when the king's mind was troubled David would take his harp and play upon it until he was soothed and quiet. And when Saul no longer wanted him, David went back to his flocks as contented as ever.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DAVID.

Now the Philistines gathered their armies together to battle. And Saul and his men prepared to meet them. The Philistines stood on a mountain on one side, and Israel on a mountain on the other side; and the valley of Elah lay between them.

Among the Philistines was a powerful giant, over ten feet high, named Goliath of Gath. He had a helmet of brass on his head, and was armed with a heavy coat of mail. He carried a spear of great length, with an iron point of enormous weight; and one bearing a shield went before him.

And he came out and defied the armies of Israel, and told them to send out some one to fight with him. If he kill me, said Goliath, we will be your slaves; but if I kill him, you shall be our slaves, and in bondage to the Philistines. This he did every morning and evening for forty days, and when Saul and all Israel heard his words they were greatly afraid.

Now the three eldest sons of Jesse were in Saul's army, but David was kept at home to feed his father's sheep. One day Jesse told David to take some parched corn, ten loaves of bread, and ten cheeses, and go down to the camp and find out how his brothers were, and bring back some word from them.

And David left his sheep, and did as his father commanded him. And he came to the camp as the two armies were about going to battle. He ran up and spoke to his brothers, and

they told him of the great giant, Goliath, who fought with the Philistines, and of whom the Israelites were sore afraid, and of the great reward the king had offered to those who should kill Goliath.

David said, Who is this Philistine that any Israelite should fear him? His brothers chided him, and said that he had only come down to see the battle, and not from any good feeling to them.

David said, What have I done? Is there not good reason for it? For he thought it strange that no Israelite had stepped forward, and given his life, if need be, to prove that there was one brave man in their midst, and to show that their trust was in God.

When Saul was told what David had said, he sent for him.

Saul said, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine, for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth up. And David said unto Saul, Thy servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock;

And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him.

Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God.

Saul said unto David, Go, and the Lord be with thee. And he put armor on David, and gave him his sword to use. David said to Saul, I cannot go with these; for I am not used to them, and have never tried them.

So he put off the armor, and went only in his shepherd's dress, and with his staff in his hand. And he chose five smooth stones that lay in his path, and put them in a bag that hung at his side, and his sling was in his hand. The sling was the favorite weapon of the Benjamites, who boasted that they could use it as well with the left hand as the right. It was made of plated strips of leather, somewhat broad in the middle where the stone was placed, and was twirled two or three times around the head before the stone or bullet was allowed to take flight. Stones could not be cast over

400 feet, but leaden bullets could be thrown as far as 600 feet.

When Goliath saw David he looked with contempt upon him, and said to him, Come to me, and I will give thy flesh to the fowls of the air and the beasts of the field. David did not trust in his own right arm, but looked to God for strength and help, and boldly marched out to meet the giant foeman.

DAVID BEFORE SAUL.

And he took a stone from his bag and put it in his sling, and slung it so that the stone sank into the forehead of the Philistine, and he fell on his face to the ground.

Then David ran and stood upon the fallen giant, and took his sword, and drew it from its sheath, and cut off his head with it.

And when the Philistines saw that their boastful champion was dead, they fled in great fear. And David was

taken before Saul, with the head of Goliath in his hand, and Saul would not let him go home any more, but kept him near him in his own house.

After the victory, Saul and his whole court went with David to Jerusalem, where he carried Goliath's head. And women came out of all the cities they passed, singing and dancing and playing on instruments of music. And in one of

DAVID AND GOLIATH.

their songs they said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands. And these words made Saul very angry, and he watched David from thenceforth with a jealous eye.

One day the evil spirit tormented Saul, and David took his harp and went in to soothe the king, as he had often done before. Saul sat with a javelin in his hand, and he threw the

DAVID WITH GOLIATH'S HEAD.

javelin at David, intending to pin him to the wall with it. But David avoided the blow twice. Saul was afraid of David, because the Lord was with him, and laid a plan to murder him, and wished his son and all his servants to join him in it.

DAVID TAKES GOLIATH'S SWORD.

But Jonathan spoke a good word for David, and persuaded his father not to kill him. And for a while all was at peace again. But the evil spirit returned to Saul, and he threw the

javelin at David while he played before him, and David stepped aside and the javelin struck the wall. Then David fled from Saul's presence, for he knew his life was not safe near the king.

He went to Jonathan and said, What have I done? and how have I injured thy father that he should seek my life? Jonathan said his father would not do anything without tell-

SAUL THROWING THE JAVELIN.

ing him. But David said that Saul would not tell Jonathan, knowing how grieved he would be. And he said also that he would hide in the field for three days. If the king missed him, Jonathan was to say that he had gone to Bethlehem to attend the yearly feast kept by the family. If he say, It is well, then there will be peace between us; but if he be very angry, then be sure that he means to do me harm.

After a long talk, in which they vowed to be true friends forever, Jonathan told David to remain away for three days, and then return to the same spot, near the rock Ezel. And

JONATHAN SHOOTING THE ARROWS.

he said, I will shoot three arrows toward it, as though I shot at a mark. And I will send a lad, saying, Go, find the arrows. If I say, The arrows are on this side of thee, take them; then come down, for no harm will be done thee. But if I say to

the lad, The arrows are beyond thee, then go thy way, and the Lord be with thee, and between thee and me forever.

So David hid himself in the field, and when the king sat

JONATHAN AND DAVID.

down to the feast of the new moon, David's place at the table was vacant. Saul asked Jonathan why the son of Jesse had not sat at meat for the past two days, and Jonathan answered

that David had asked leave of him to go to Bethlehem to visit his family.

Saul was angry with Jonathan, and spoke harshly to him, and said that as long as David lived Jonathan could not be king. And he commanded his son to bring David to him that he might put him to death. Jonathan said, Why shall he be slain? what hath he done?

Saul threw the javelin at him, as he had done at David, and Jonathan knew by this that his father was determined to kill David. So Jonathan rose from the table and ate nothing; and the next day he went out in the field and took a lad with him.

And he said to the lad, Run, and pick up the arrows which I shoot. And as the lad ran, he shot an arrow over his head. And as the lad looked around for the arrow, Jonathan cried out, Is it not beyond thee? Make speed, haste, stay not. And the lad gathered up the arrows and came to his master, nor guessed that the words spoken were meant for any ear but his own. And Jonathan sent him back to the city with the bows and arrows.

As soon as the lad was gone David came out from his hiding-place, and bowed himself to the ground three times. Then he and Jonathan kissed one another and wept bitterly, for it was like death for them to be separated. And when the sad farewell was over, Jonathan returned to his home, and David went to Nob, to seek counsel of the high priest Ahimelech; and afterwards hid in the cave Adullam, to escape from the Philistines, with whom he fought from time to time as God commanded him.

Saul pursued him from place to place, and was finally told that he was in the wilderness of Engedi. Then Saul took three thousand men and went out among the rocks to find David. And he came to a cave, and being weary he lay down to rest.

Now David and his men were in the same cave, and David might have done anything he chose to Saul. But David did not wish to hurt Saul, and he simply drew near softly and cut off a piece of the king's robe. And it grieved him even

to do this, for Saul had been anointed king, and as such should be respected and honored.

David would not let his men do Saul any harm; and when Saul woke from his sleep he rose and went on his way. David followed him out of the cave, and cried after him, My lord

DAVID IN HIS HIDING-PLACE.

the king. And when Saul looked back David bowed with his face to the ground. And he asked Saul why he wished to kill him, and showed him the piece he had cut from the king's robe. And he told Saul that he had done no wrong, and had spared his life when he had him in his power. Why then, he asked, was Saul so anxious to kill him.

When David had finished speaking, Saul said, with tears, Is this thy voice, my son David? Thou art more righteous than I; for thou hast been good to me in return for all the evil I have done thee. The Lord delivered me into thy hand, and thou didst not kill me. The Lord reward thee for it. Now I know that thou shalt be king over Israel, and that the kingdom shall be established in thine hand.

DAVID FINDS SAUL ASLEEP IN THE CAVE.

And he begged David to be kind to him and his descendants, and the two parted.

Samuel died, and was buried at Ramah; and all the Israelites mourned the loss of so good and wise a man.

Now David had no confidence in Saul, for he knew that in his heart the king desired his death. So he went to Gath, the land of the Philistines, to escape out of Saul's hand.

And while he and his men dwelt there, the Philistines gathered their armies together to fight Israel. And Achish, king of Gath, told David that he and his men must go out with the Philistines, and he promised to make David an officer of high rank. And the Philistines encamped at Shunem and the Israelites at Gilboa.

While Saul was acting the part of a good king, he had driv-

SAUL CONSULTING THE WITCH.

en all the magicians and wizards out of the land, and made it a crime to visit such fortune-tellers. When he came to Gilboa, and saw what an army of Philistines he would have to meet, his heart shook within him.

He prayed to the Lord, but the Lord answered him not by a vision, nor did any priest or prophet come to him.

He learned that there was a woman living at Endor, who

was known as the witch of Endor. And Saul changed his clothes so that he would not be known, and taking two men with him went out at night to the woman's house.

And he told the woman to bring him up the spirit he should call for. The woman said, Dost thou not know that Saul hath sent all the wizards out of the land? Wherefore then dost thou lay a snare for my life?

Saul promised that no harm should come to her. Then said the woman, Whom shall I bring up? And he said, Samuel.

When Samuel appeared the woman cried out with a loud voice, saying, Why hast thou deceived me? for thou art Saul. The king told her not to be afraid, and asked her what she saw. She said she saw an old man covered with a mantle. And Saul, knowing it was Samuel, bowed himself to the ground. Samuel asked why Saul had sent for him. Saul told him that he was in great distress because of the Philistines, that he could get no help from God, and had called up Samuel that he might tell him what to do.

Samuel said, Why come to me when the Lord hath left thee and become thine enemy? The Lord hath done to thee as he promised, and will also deliver Israel into the hands of the Philistines. And he also told Saul that he and his sons would soon die. Then Saul fell to the ground from weakness as well as fear, for he had eaten nothing all day. The woman urged him to take some food that he might have strength to travel, and he partook of some she prepared, and after a brief rest went on his way.

Now the Philistines went out to fight against Israel, and David and his men went with Achish. But the lords of the Philistines were not willing to have the Hebrews join their ranks, for fear they might prove foes instead of friends. So notwithstanding that Achish spoke in his favor, David and his men were forced to return to Gath. And the Philistines went up to Jezreel, where the Israelites were in camp. The two armies fought, the Israelites were put to flight, and Saul's sons were killed in the battle. Saul himself was badly wounded by an arrow, and he called to his armor-bearer and told him to thrust him through and through with his sword, lest the Philistines should come and torture him. But the

armor-bearer would not lift his hand against his king. Therefore Saul took a sword, and fell upon it. And when his armor-bearer saw that Saul was dead, he drew his own sword and fell upon it, and died with him.

Then David was anointed king at Hebron, and reigned over the tribe of Judah only. The other ten tribes of Israel were ruled by Ish-bosheth, a son of Saul. But after the death of

DEATH OF SAUL.

Ish-bosheth David was chosen king over all Israel, and he made his home at Jerusalem. The ark was still resting at Kirjath-jearim, and David resolved to have it brought to Jerusalem. A troop of Levites bore it with staves on their shoulders, as Moses had commanded, and David headed the great procession that bore it in triumph to the tabernacle prepared for it on Mount Zion. Here David performed the part of priest

and king; and he also appointed certain Levites to minister before the ark continually, and to thank and praise the Lord God of Israel.

David led the people to war against the Philistines, and helped them to win several victories. He prayed to God, and tried to do what was right, and was just in all his dealings with the people. But if at any time he was led into sin, for

DAVID MADE KING.

he was not a perfect man, he would ask God's forgiveness and strive to lead a better and a holier life.

David was a great poet, and wrote psalms, or sacred songs, that were set to music. Some are songs of praise, others of lamentation; and if any heart to-day is sorry or sad, it can always find a word of comfort and strength in the Psalms of David.

Now David had a son named Absalom, of whom he was very fond. Absalom was considered the handsomest young man in the kingdom, and was particularly noted for his beautiful head of hair. He had one of his half-brothers put to death, and after this crime he fled to Geshur, where he dwelt for two or three years.

Notwithstanding Absalom's faults David was very fond of his son, and mourned his absence from him, and was glad of an excuse to call him home.

Absalom was now the heir to the throne, and wished to secure it during the lifetime of his father. His fine appearance attracted the people, and he used every means in his power to win their favor. He made a great show of sympathy with those who brought their cases before David, and hinted at what might be expected of him when he should be king. In this way he stole the hearts of the people of Israel, so that they were impatient for Absalom to take the throne, and David was persuaded by his friends to leave Jerusalem. And he went to Mahanaim, across the Jordan.

When Absalom heard that his father had fled, he went at once to Jerusalem and took possession of the throne. Among those who joined him was Ahithophel, who had formerly been a good friend to David, and regarded by him as the wisest of oracles.

David sent his friend Hushai to join Absalom's forces, and to do what he could to weaken the power of Ahithophel. Ahithophel advised that Absalom should pursue the king that very night. But Hushai, whose object was to gain time for David, said that it would be better to go out against him with a force he could not withstand. Absalom listened to Hushai, and time was thus given to the king and the people, many of whom repented the course they had taken.

The king soon raised a large force, which he divided into three armies, led by Joab, Abishai, and Ittai of Gath. David intended to take the chief command himself, but the people would not let him risk his life; so Joab was placed in command.

The battle took place on the edge of the forest of Ephraim, and Joab, who was a skilful soldier, drew the enemy into a

wood, and hemmed them in so that they were destroyed with ease. And God gave the victory to David's armies.

Twenty thousand of Absalom's troops were slain, and the rest fled to their homes. Absalom rode on a swift mule, but as he went, his long hair, of which he was so vain, caught in the boughs of a tree and he was left hanging there.

David had charged all his troops to spare the life of Absalom, and those who saw him dared not kill him. But when

THE DEATH OF ABSALOM.

Joab heard of it he hastened to the spot and pierced Absalom through with three darts. His body was then taken down and thrown into a pit in the forest, and afterwards a monument was built there.

David waited at the gate of Mahanaim, more anxious to learn that his son lived than that the battle had been gained. And when he heard that Absalom was dead he went into his

room over the gate and covered his face and cried with a loud voice, O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!

And those who had brought the news of the victory slunk away and were as ashamed as if they had been the bearers of

DAVID HEARING OF ABSALOM'S DEATH.

evil tidings, when they heard how the king grieved for his son.

But Joab rebuked the king, and he arose and sat in the gate, and hid his sorrow from the people. As he would not appear to reign by force of arms, he waited until he was publicly in-

vited to be king once more over all Israel instead of over the tribe of Judah only.

David reigned in Hebron seven years and a half, and in Jerusalem thirty-three years. These years had been rough, and dark, and full of danger. But the Lord was a Lamp to

DAVID PRAISING GOD.

his feet and a Light to his path. He was also a Rock on which he could stand firmly, a Fortress in which he could hide, and a Shield to ward off the attacks of his enemies. Among his last words were, He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God.

CHAPTER XXIV.

KING SOLOMON.—ELIJAH.

It was David's wish to build a magnificent temple in the city of Jerusalem. But God put a stop to his plans, and told him that the work should be done by a son of David's who was to reign after him. So David spent the last years of his

SOLOMON MADE KING.

life in collecting materials for the temple which Solomon was to build.

Solomon was but twelve or thirteen years of age when, by the death of his father, David, he became king over Israel. But he grew in strength and wisdom every day, and practised the lessons taught him by his father.

In the fourth year of his reign he began to build the house of the Lord at Jerusalem, with the help of Hiram, king of Tyre, who furnished skilled workmen. The temple was built on Mount Moriah, and the foundation-stones were of enormous size and very durable. All the stones were made

BUILDING THE TEMPLE.

ready before they were brought to the place, so that there was no sound of hammer, axe, nor any iron tool heard in the house while it was building.

The walls of the Holy Place were of hewn stone wainscotted with cedar and overlaid with plates of solid gold.

The temple was about one hundred feet long, thirty-three feet wide, and fifty feet high; and it had a porch at the east end, which was carried up into a tower, or steeple nearly two

hundred feet high. The main building consisted of three stories, in which were rooms set apart for the use of the priests, or to hold the treasures of the temple. All the vessels were of the finest workmanship; much gold and silver was used, and no expense was spared to make the temple of the

SHIPS OF SOLOMON.

Lord, both inside and out, a marvel of magnificence and beauty.

It took more than seven years to build the temple; and after it was completed Solomon began the building of his

own house, which took thirteen years more, and was a palace of splendor.

Solomon had ships on the sea that brought him gold from Ophir, and he added to his wealth day by day, and his fame was spread abroad through the land.

One day two women were brought before the king, that he might decide their case. One of them said, I and this woman dwell in one house, and my child was born there. And when my babe was three days old, this woman had a child born to her, and it died in the night. And while I slept she took my son from me and laid it in her bosom, and laid her dead child on my breast. And at daylight, when I looked at the child in my arms, I saw it was not my own son.

The other woman said, Nay, but the living is my son, and the dead one is thy son. And thus they contradicted each other before the king, each one claiming the living child as her own.

The king said to his servants, Bring me a sword. And they brought it, and stood before him. And the king said, Divide the living child in two, and give half to the one, and half to the other.

Then the woman whose the living child was cried out, O my lord, give her the living child, and do not kill it. But the other said, Let it be neither hers nor mine, but divide it.

Then the king said, Give the living child to her who was anxious it should not be killed, for she is the mother of it. And all Israel heard of the judgment with which the king had judged; and they held him in high honor, for they saw that his wisdom came from God.

Now the fame of Solomon's wisdom and the splendor of his surroundings came to the ears of the queen of Sheba. And she desired to see him, and to talk with him. She was herself very wealthy, and she came to Jerusalem with a great train of camels bearing spices, and gold, and precious stones.

She asked Solomon a great many questions about his worship of God, and he told her all that she desired to know. And when she had heard his words, and seen the magnificence of his house, and the wise management of all his affairs, she was quite overcome. And she said to the king, It was all

true that I heard of thee in my own land. But I would not believe it until I saw it with mine own eyes; and behold, the half was not told me. Thy wisdom and prosperity are greater than I imagined. Happy are they who continually hear thy

THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

words of wisdom. Because the Lord loved Israel, therefore he made thee king to rule wisely and justly.

And she gave the king rich gifts of gold, and spices, and precious stones, which she brought with her. And Solomon made her valuable presents that would remind her

when in her own kingdom, of what she had seen and heard at Jerusalem.

Solomon lived in luxury, and was so much engaged in heaping up the riches of earth that he grew careless of the riches

QUEEN OF SHEBA.

of heaven. Now there was no law in those days that a man should have but one wife; but the Israelites were commanded not to marry those who worshipped idols.

But Solomon gave his heart to many women, and filled his

palace with those who worshipped idols instead of the true God. And the king neglected the worship of the temple, and the care of the nation, and was persuaded by his wives to build temples to their idols and to worship with them.

God was angry with Solomon, and punished him for his sins of disobedience and ingratitude. For David's sake he should remain king of Israel until his death, but as a punishment the kingdom should be rent from his son.

SOLOMON WORSHIPPING IDOLS.

Solomon reigned forty years over Jerusalem, and was not over sixty years of age when he died. His wise words were kept in a book and have been handed down to us as the Proverbs of Solomon.

Rehoboam, his son, reigned in his stead, and dwelt at Shechem.

Now a man named Jeroboam had been made much of by

Solomon, and had been told by a prophet that he was to become king of the ten tribes about to be rent from the house of David. Not content to wait until Solomon's death, he began to plot and scheme, and being found out, fled to Egypt to escape punishment.

After Solomon's death the ten tribes sent for Jeroboam, and he came up from Egypt, and went to Rehoboam with a party of men to ask the king to treat the people better than king Solomon had done the last years of his life.

Rehoboam spoke harshly to them, and said, My father made your yoke heavy, and I will add to your yoke; he chastised you with whips, but I will chastise you with scorpions. And the Israelites departed to their tents.

Afterwards Rehoboam sent Adoram to collect the taxes, and the Israelites stoned him to death. Rehoboam fled to Jerusalem, and called up the tribes of Judah and Benjamin to fight against the ten tribes that had gone over to Jeroboam.

But God spoke to Shemaiah, the prophet, and told him that there must be no bloodshed, for He had brought this thing about and would settle it in His own way. And Rehoboam listened to what the prophet said, and went not out to fight.

Jeroboam then became king of Israel, and lest the people should be turned from him by going to the temple at Jerusalem, he built a temple at Dan and another at Bethel, and placed golden calves therein for the people to worship. He made priests of the lowest of the people, not choosing them from among the Levites, as God had commanded, and was himself high priest as well as king.

While the king was offering incense at Bethel, a prophet arose, and in the name of the Lord announced that a king of David's line, Josiah by name, should burn on that unholy altar the bones of the priests that ministered there. And as a sign that he spoke the truth, the Lord would break the altar in two and scatter the ashes.

Jeroboam put forth his hand, saying, Lay hold of him! And the king's hand became stiffened so that he could not move it. At the same moment the altar was rent and the ashes scattered about. And the king asked the prophet to

ELIJAH FED BY RAVENS.

entreat God to restore his withered hand. And the prophet besought the Lord, and the king's hand was restored again.

But Jeroboam did not confess his guilt, or repent of his sins, but gave himself up to the worship of idols, and was more wicked than any of the judges of Israel. He reigned twenty-two years, and was succeeded by his son Nadab.

When Rehoboam died, Abijah his son reigned in his stead, and was succeeded by his son Asa, who was a good man, and served God with all his heart.

In the thirty-first year of King Asa, Omri began to reign over Israel; and he did worse than those who had gone before him. After Omri's death, Ahab his son took the throne, and was even more wicked than his father. He married Jezebel, daughter of the king of Tyre and Sidon, and was persuaded by her to forsake the worship of God, and to worship idols, and to build temples for them.

The prophet Elijah had doubtless warned Ahab of the punishment he would receive for his sins, but Ahab paid no heed to his words. Then Elijah said, As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall be no rain nor dew for years to come.

God commanded Elijah to hide himself from Ahab by the brook Cherith, that flowed into the Jordan. And he went, and the ravens brought him bread and meat each morning and evening, and he drank the water from the brook. And neither friends nor foes knew of his hiding-place. But the drought was so severe that after a while the brook dried up, and Elijah had no water to drink.

God commanded him to go on to Zarephath, where a poor widow lived who would take care of him. So he went to Zarephath. And as he came to the gate of the city, he saw a widow woman there gathering sticks. And he called to her, and said, Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink. And as she was going for it, he called to her and asked her to bring him also a morsel of bread. The woman said that she had but a handful of meal and a little oil in the house, and she was gathering sticks to make a fire so that she could cook it for herself and her son. When that was gone, they would have to die.

Elijah told her to have no fear, but to make the cake and bring it to him, and afterwards she and her son might eat. And she went, and did as Elijah told her, and the barrel of meal did not fail, nor was there any lack of oil in the cruse, or jug, in which it was kept.

ELIJAH AND THE WIDOW'S CHILD.

Elijah made his home with this woman, and had a room to himself in the upper part of the house. One day her son fell sick, and lay in a dead faint. And she went to Elijah, and accused him of having brought this evil upon her. Elijah said, Give me thy son. And he took him out of her arms, and carried him to his own room and laid him on the bed.

And he stretched himself on the child three times, and prayed God to make the child well again. And God heard his prayer, and the boy came to life. And Elijah took him to his mother, and said, See, thy son liveth.

And the woman, who was a Gentile, said to Elijah, Now by this I know that thou art a man of God, and that all thou sayest will come true.

At the end of three years God commanded Elijah to show himself to Ahab, for there would soon be rain in the land. And Elijah left his hiding-place and went to Jezreel, where Ahab dwelt.

Now, the governor of Ahab's house was named Obadiah, and we are told that he feared the Lord greatly. In the midst of Ahab's wicked court, he remained a good and pious man, and would not bow down to images of wood and stone.

And the famine was so great in Samaria that King Ahab was afraid that he would lose all his flocks and herds. So he sent Obadiah one way, and he went another to look for grass to feed the cattle. And Obadiah met Elijah, and knew him, and bowed down before him, and saluted him reverently.

Elijah said, Go tell thy master that I am here. Obadiah said that Ahab had sought far and near for Elijah and could not find him. And now, said he, if I tell Ahab thou art here, and he comes and finds thee not, he will kill me. For Obadiah thought that Elijah might disappear during his absence.

But Elijah said that he would surely show himself to Ahab that day. And when Ahab saw Elijah, he said to him, Art thou he that troubleth Israel? Elijah answered, No; but that he and his father caused the trouble, because they had disobeyed God and worshipped idols. And he told the king to gather all his people together on Mount Carmel.

An altar had once been built there for the worship of God, but it was now in ruins.

Elijah called upon the people to decide, as there could be only one God, whether they would follow Jehovah or Baal. But none of them answered a word. Then said Elijah, I only remain a prophet of the Lord; but Baal has four hundred and fifty prophets. Bring us two oxen, and let them choose an ox for themselves, and cut it in pieces and lay it on the wood,

and put no fire under it. And I will prepare the other ox, and lay it on the wood with no fire under it. And call ye on the name of your gods, and I will call on the name of our Lord; and the God that answereth by fire, let him be God.

All the people agreed to this. And the prophets of Baal cried out from morning till noon, O Baal hear us. But there was no answer, and they leaped up and down before the altar. Elijah told them to cry louder, for their god might be talking, or busy, or gone on a journey; or perhaps he slept, and must be awakened.

They took his advice in sober earnest, and cried aloud, and cut themselves, as idolaters often did, so as to mingle their blood with the blood of the sacrifice. And they kept this up till evening, and there came no answer to their prayers.

Then Elijah said to the people, Come near to me. And he took twelve stones and built up the altar of the Lord that had been broken down. And he made a broad trench or ditch around the altar. And when the ox was laid on the wood, he said, Fill four barrels with water, and pour it on the offering and on the wood. And this was done three times, so that the water ran round about the altar, and he filled the trench also with water.

And Elijah drew near, and cried out, Hear me, O Lord, hear me, that this people may know that thou art the Lord God, and that thou hast turned their hearts back from the worship of idols.

Then fire came down from heaven and burned up all that was on the altar, and even the stones and the earth around it and the flames licked up the water that was in the trench. And when the people saw it, they fell on their faces and said, The Lord he is the God; the Lord he is the God.

Elijah ordered the prophets of Baal put to death; and after this was done he told King Ahab to eat and drink, for there would soon be abundance of rain.

Then Elijah took a servant with him, and went to the top of Mount Carmel. And he hid his face, and prayed earnestly to God. And he said to his servant, Go up now, and look toward the sea. And the man looked and said that he saw nothing. Elijah said, Go again seven times. And the

man did so; and at the seventh time he said, Behold, there is a little cloud rising out of the sea, the size of a man's hand.

Elijah bade the man go to Ahab, and tell him to hasten down the mountain, lest the rain should stop him.

In the meanwhile the sky grew black with clouds, the wind came up, and soon there was a great rain; and Ahab and Elijah went in great haste to Jezreel.

When Jezebel heard all that Elijah had done, and that he had ordered her ministers put to death, she sent word to the prophet that he should be put to death the next day. So Elijah fled for his life to Beersheba and left his servant there; but he himself went a day's journey into the wilderness, and sat down under a juniper tree. And he prayed that he might die, for he was faint with hunger.

As he lay there he fell asleep; and an angel touched him, and said, Arise and eat. And he looked, and saw a cake baked on the coals, and a jar of water quite near him. And he ate and drank, and lay down again.

And the angel came again the second time and touched him, and told him to rise and eat, for he had a long journey before him. And he arose, and did eat and drink, and was so strengthened that he went for forty days and nights without food. And he came to Horeb, the mount of God, and finding a cave, lodged there. And the Lord spoke to him and said, What doest thou here, Elijah?

Elijah answered that he had had God's glory at heart, and had tried to lead the children of Israel in the right way. But they had broken God's laws, thrown down his altars, and put his prophets to death. I only am left, said Elijah, and they seek my life. This was his excuse for leaving his work.

The Lord said, Go forth, and stand on the mount of God. And there came an earthquake that rent the mountains, and broke the rocks in pieces. Then there was a great fire, and after the fire, a still small voice.

When Elijah heard it he wrapped his face in his mantle, and stood at the entrance to the cave. And the voice said to him, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he repeated what he had said to the angel in the cave, and told that he had fled because Jezebel meant to kill him.

The voice said to him, Go toward the wilderness of Damascus, and anoint Hazael to be king of Syria, Jehu to be king

ELIJAH IN THE WILDERNESS.

of Israel, and Elisha to be a prophet in thy place. So Elijah went his way, to do as the Lord commanded.

Elisha was ploughing in the field with twelve yoke of oxen, when Elijah drew near and threw his mantle over him.

Elisha understood this as a sign that he was to follow the prophet and wait upon him.

So he left the oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, Let me, I pray thee, kiss my father and mother, and then I will follow thee.

And he left father and mother, and all, to do the Lord's work and to wait upon the holy man, Elijah.

Now there was a man in Jezreel, named Naboth, who had a fine vineyard near the palace of King Ahab. And Ahab asked Naboth to give him his vineyard, for he would like to have it for a garden, as it was near his house. He would give him a better vineyard for it, or give him the worth of it in money.

But the land had been in the family for a long time, and Naboth felt that it would be a sin to part with it, and he told the king so. Ahab had set his heart on having the land, and was so cast down by Naboth's refusal that he took to his bed and would eat no food.

And Jezebel came to him and inquired what made him so sad that he could not eat. And he told her it was because Naboth would not let him have his vineyard.

Jezebel said, Art thou the king, and wilt thou put up with such insolence? Arise and eat, and be of good cheer, for I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth.

So she wrote letters in Ahab's name and signed them with his seal and sent them to the elders and nobles of the city of Israel. They were told to proclaim a feast and to put Naboth in a high place, and hire two men to swear that he had spoken wickedly against God and the king.

So the feast was proclaimed, and Naboth had the seat of honor among the people. And there came in two men, who declared that they had heard Naboth speak wickedly of God and the king. Then the people drove Naboth out of the city, and stoned him to death, and sent word to Jezebel that her commands were obeyed.

Jezebel then told Ahab to go and take possession of the vineyard which Naboth refused to sell him, for Naboth was dead. And Ahab set out at once for the vineyard which he longed to add to his own land, and to make of it a royal garden.

Then the Lord spoke to Elijah, and commanded him to go down and meet King Ahab in the vineyard of Naboth, and to tell him that the dogs should lick his blood in the place where they licked the blood of Naboth. And Jezebel should be torn to pieces by dogs near the wall of the city.

ELIJAH AND KING AHAB.

When Ahab heard the words that the Lord told Elijah to speak, he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth and ashes, and appeared to be very sorry for what he had done.

In a few years Jehoshaphat, king of Judah, paid a visit to Ahab and was persuaded by him to take arms with him

against the Syrians. Ahab was killed in the battle, but Jehoshaphat escaped. We are told that Jehoshaphat sought the Lord with all his heart. He was anxious to do nothing to displease God. He reigned over Judah twenty-five years, and was succeeded by his son Jehoram, who had been well trained by his father.

After the death of Ahab, his son Ahaziah became king of Israel. And there was trouble with the Moabites.

One day Ahaziah fell down through a lattice in his upper chamber to the ground and was badly hurt. And he sent messengers to inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron, if he was likely to recover from his sickness.

But the Lord told Elijah to go and meet the messengers, and to ask them if there was no God in Israel, that they had to go and inquire of Baal-zebub, the god of Ekron. And Elijah did so, and the messengers returned to the king, and when he asked the reason, they told him that a man met them and inquired if there was no God in Israel that the king had sent them to pray to a graven image. And because the king had done this he should surely die. And Ahaziah did not rise again from his sick-bed; and when he died his son Jehoram reigned in his stead.

Now the time of Elijah's death was close at hand. And he and Elisha were at Gilgal. And Elijah said to Elisha, Stay here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel. Elisha said to him, As the Lord liveth, and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee. So they went down to Bethel together.

And the sons of the prophets at Bethel asked Elisha if he knew that his master was to be taken from him that day. And he said, Yes, I know it; hold your peace. Elijah said to Elisha, Tarry here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jericho. But Elisha would not; so they went to Jericho together. And the sons of the prophets at Jericho asked Elisha if he knew that Elijah was to be taken from him that day. And Elisha answered them as he did those at Bethel.

Elijah said to Elisha, Stay here, I pray thee, for the Lord hath sent me to Jordan. But Elisha would not; and they went on together. And when they came to the Jordan,

Elijah took his mantle and struck the waters, so that they divided, and the two walked over on dry ground.

And when they were on the other side Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I am taken away

ELIJAH GOES TO HEAVEN.

from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. He wanted to be twice as wise as Elijah had been, and to do even greater works for the glory and honor of God.

Elijah said, Thou hast asked a hard thing; nevertheless if thou dost see me when I am taken from thee thou shalt have thy wish. And as they walked and talked together there suddenly appeared above them a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and Elijah was caught up as by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw it and cried out, My father, my father, the chariot of Israel, and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more; and he rent his clothes with grief. Then he took up Elijah's mantle, that fell from him, and went and stood on the bank of the river Jordan. And he took the mantle and struck the waters as Elijah had done, and they parted, and he went over dry shod. This was proof that God was with him, though Elijah was not. And the prophets at Jericho bowed down before him, and hailed him as their leader.

CHAPTER XXV.

ELISHA.

As Elisha went from Jericho to Bethel, a crowd of children came out of the city and mocked him, saying, Go up, thou bald head; Go up, thou bald head. They had been brought up to worship idols, and to despise the prophets who taught God's laws; and having heard how Elijah had gone up into heaven, they spoke their wish that Elisha would go up in the same way. And they hoped by their ill-treatment to drive him out of Bethel.

Elisha turned back and looked at them, and cursed them in the name of the Lord; and there came two bears out of the wood, and ate up forty-two of the children. And after this the people of Bethel were afraid to speak ill of Elisha, or to do him harm; and he went from place to place teaching the people.

At Shunem there lived a rich woman, who loved God. And she invited Elisha to call upon her whenever he passed that way. And she and her husband set apart a quiet room for

the prophet's use, where he could rest and refresh himself, and feel at ease.

Elisha was grateful for this kindness, and wished to make som return. So he sent for his servant, Gehazi, and asked

THE CHILDREN OF BETHEL.

him what he thought the woman would like. Gehazi said that she greatly desired a child. Elisha sent for the woman, and she came to the door of his room; and he told her that at a certain season God would give her a son. And God did so.

When the child was grown, he went out one day to his father, to the reapers in a field near the house. And the boy said to his father, My head, my head! And the father told a lad to carry the child to his mother.

And the mother took him and held him in her lap till noon, and then he died. And she laid him upon the bed of the man of God, and then shut the door and went out. She called unto her husband and said, Send me one of the young men, and one of the asses, that I may go after the man of God. Her husband said, Why go to him to-day? it is neither new moon nor the Sabbath. She did not wish to tell him that their son was dead; but bade him not to hinder her, for it was right that she should go.

And she and her servant rode in great haste toward Mount Carmel. Elisha saw her afar off, and said to Gehazi, Behold, yonder is the Shunamite woman. Run and meet her, and say to her, Is it well with thee? and thy husband? and thy child? And she answered, It is well. And when she came near to Elisha, she seized hold of his feet. Gehazi stepped forward to push her away, but Elisha said to him, Let her alone, for she is in great trouble, and the Lord hath hid it from me.

Then the woman said, Did I ask thee for a son? Did I not say, Do not deceive me.

Elisha knew by these words that her child was dead. So he gave his staff to Gehazi, and told him to run with speed, to make no stops on the way, and to lay the staff on the face of the dead child. But the mother of the child clung to Elisha, and declared that she would not leave him. So Elisha went to Shunem with her. And Gehazi ran on before and laid the staff on the face of the child, who took no notice of him. And he ran and told Elisha that the lad was not awake.

When Elisha came to the house he found the child was dead and laid on his bed. So he went into his room and shut the door upon himself and the dead boy, and prayed unto the Lord. And he lay on the child until the cold flesh became warm. Then he left the chamber and walked in the house to and fro, and went back and stretched himself upon the child again. And the lad began to breathe, and opened his eyes, and was well once more.

Elisha sent for the mother, and when she came into the room, he said, Take up thy son.

And she fell at Elisha's feet and worshipped him, and then

ELISHA AND THE CHILD.

clasped her son in her arms and went rejoicing out of the room.

Now there was in Syria a man named Naaman. He was a captain in the king's army, and a brave and honorable man. But he was afflicted with leprosy; a most loathsome disease, which none of the physicians were able to cure.

The Syrians were idolaters, and often at war with Israel, from which land Naaman had brought home a little maid to wait upon his wife. The captive slave was kindly treated, and learned to love her master and mistress, and was much distressed over Naaman's illness.

Young as she was, she had heard of Elisha and the miracles he performed, and she spoke to her mistress about him, and said she was sure that he could cure her husband. The little maid's words were repeated to Benhadad, king of Syria, who sent Naaman with a letter and some rich presents to the king of Israel, asking him as a great favor to cure the sick man. He thought that Jehoram had but to command Elisha to heal the sick and perform miracles. But Jehoram, king of Israel, rent his clothes and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to cure a man of leprosy? For he thought it was merely an excuse for waging war against him.

When Elisha heard of the king's distress, he sent to him, saying, Let the man come to me, and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel. So Naaman came with his horses and chariots to the door of Elisha's house.

Elisha sent a messenger to him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thou shalt be healed. Naaman was angry, for he had thought that the prophet would come out to him, and call on the name of God, and heal him by a touch. Are not Abana and Pharpar, he said, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them and be clean? And he went away in a great rage.

His servants came near, and said, If the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldst thou not have done it? how much rather then when he saith to thee, Wash and be clean. Being persuaded by them, he went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, as Elisha commanded, and his flesh was like that of a child, and health and strength came back to him.

Then he and his company went to Elisha's house, and Naaman offered him a present in token of his gratitude. But Elisha would not accept it. He did not do God's work for pay. So Naaman went his way, promising to look to God

THE LITTLE CAPTIVE MAID.

for help, even though he might pretend to be a worshipper of idols.

Now Gehazi thought that Elisha was very foolish not to take the gifts that were offered him. So he ran after Naaman and urged him to give him money and clothing for two young men, sons of the prophets, who were in great need. Naaman sent two of his servants back with two bags of silver and two suits of clothes. And when they came to the house, Gehazi took the goods from them, and they departed.

And Gehazi came in and stood before Elisha. Now the Lord had told Elisha what Gehazi had done; and when he stood before him, Elisha said, Where hast thou been, Gehazi? And he said, Thy servant has been nowhere. Elisha said, Did I not know it when Naaman left his chariot to meet thee? Is this a time for us to take money, and garments, and riches? Therefore, because thou hast done this thing, the leprosy of Naaman shall be upon thee and thy children forever. And as Elisha spoke the leprosy came upon Gehazi, and he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow.

The sons of the prophets said to Elisha, The house in which we live is too strait for us. Let us go, we pray thee, to the river Jordan, and cut down trees, and build a larger house, where we may dwell.

And one of them said to Elisha, Be content, I pray thee, and go with thy servants. So he went with them. And when they came to the Jordan they cut down timber. But while one of them was felling a beam the axe-head flew off, and fell into the water. And he came to Elisha and said, Alas, master! for it was borrowed. And he cried. And the man of God said, Where did it fall? And he showed him the place. Then Elisha cut down a stick, and threw it into the river where the axe had fallen, and the iron axe did swim. And Elisha said, Take it up. And he put out his hand and took it.

Then Benhadad, king of Syria, warred against Israel, and commanded his soldiers to go in a certain direction to find Jehoram, king of Israel, and to take him captive. But when the soldiers came to the place Jehoram had fled, because Elisha had told him that the Syrians were coming there.

This happened so many times that Benhadad was greatly troubled; for he thought that one of his own men must have told the king of Israel. Therefore he called his servants to him, and asked them, saying, Which of you is for the king of Israel? One of them answered, None of us is on his side, O king: it is Elisha who tells the king all that thou dost speak, even when thou art shut in thy bed-chamber.

Then the king of Syria said, Go and spy where he is that I may send and fetch him. When they had inquired, they came back and told Benhadad that he was in the city of Dothan. Therefore Benhadad sent horses, and chariots, and soldiers to Dothan, and they came by night and surrounded the city. In the morning, when Elisha's servant went out of the house, he saw them. And he said to Elisha, Alas, my master! what shall we do? And he answered, Fear not, for we have more with us than the king of Syria has with him. Then Elisha prayed that the Lord would open his servant's eyes that he might see. And the Lord made the young man see; and behold, the mountain was full of chariots and horses of fire that the Lord had sent to guard Elisha.

When Benhadad's soldiers came into the city to take him, Elisha prayed unto the Lord and said, Smite this people with blindness. And the Lord did as Elisha asked, and made them blind, so that they groped about and had to be led from place to place. Elisha went to them and said, Follow me, and I will bring you to the man you seek. And he led them to the city of Samaria, where the king of Israel was. And when they had come there, Elisha prayed the Lord to take away their blindness. And the Lord opened their eyes, and they saw that they were in Samaria.

Then Jehoram, king of Israel, said to Elisha, My father, shall I smite them? Elisha answered, Thou shalt not smite them; set bread and water before them that they may eat and drink, and go to their master. And he prepared great provision for them, and when they had eaten and drunk he sent them away, and they went back to their master Benhadad, the king of Syria.

Soon after this Benhadad gathered his army together, and went up to fight against Samaria. His soldiers besieged it,

and would let no food be brought in for the people in it to eat, and there was a great famine in the city. And as the king of Israel was walking among his soldiers on the top of the wall, a woman called out to him, saying, Hĕlp me, O king! He said, What aileth thee? She answered, This woman who is with me said to me, Give thy son that we may eat him to-day, and I will give my son to-morrow. So we boiled my son, and did eat him. And I said to her the next day, Give thy son that we may eat him; and she has hid her son.

When the king heard the voice of the woman, he rent his clothes, for it grieved him to know that the famine was so great in the land that people were tempted to do such dreadful things.

Jehoram, the son of Ahab, was a wicked man, and for his sins and the sins of his people God sent all these troubles upon them. Instead of repenting, and asking God to take away their troubles, he laid the blame on Elisha, and said his head should be taken off him that very day.

But Elisha knew the king would send a messenger to kill him. And when the messenger came to his house, Elisha commanded the men who were there to shut the door and keep him outside.

Then the king came to Elisha's house leaning on the arm of one of his officers. And Elisha told them that on the morrow there should be plenty of food in the city. But the officer who was with the king would not believe it. Then Elisha said to him that because he did not believe the words of the Lord, he should see but should not taste of the food the Lord would send.

And four leprous men of the children of Israel sat together by the gate of the city. And they said to one another, Why do we sit here until we die? If we go into the city where the famine is, we shall die there. And if we sit still here with nothing to eat, we shall die also. Now, therefore, come and let us go unto the host of the Syrians. If they save us alive we shall live; and if they kill us we shall but die. And they rose up in the twilight to go unto the camp of the Syrians, but when they were come to the farthest part of the camp of Syria there was no man there. For the Lord had made the

host of the Syrians think that they heard the noise of chariots and horses, even the noise of a great host. Therefore as it grew dark they had risen up and left their tents, and their horses, and everything that was in the camp, and fled for their lives.

When the lepers had gone through the camp they went into one tent and ate and drank, and took the silver and gold and raiment that they found, and went and hid them. Then they came again, and entered into another tent and took more silver and gold, and hid that also.

Then they said to one another, We do not well. We should not keep the good news to ourselves, and if we stay here until morning some mischief will come upon us. Now, therefore, let us go and tell the king of Israel.

So they came and called unto the porter of the city, saying, We went to the camp of the Syrians, and there was no man there, but horses tied, and asses tied, and the tents as they were. And the porters went and told the king. And the king rose up in the night, and said to his servants, I will tell you what the Syrians have done. They know that we are hungry; therefore they have gone from the camp and hid themselves, so that when we go out for food they can make captives of us, and take possession of the city.

One of his servants answered, and said, Let us take some of the horses that we have left, and go out and see. They took, therefore, two chariot horses, and the king sent after the host of the Syrians, saying, Go and see. And they went as far as the river Jordan, and lo, all the road was strewed with garments and vessels which the Syrians had thrown away in their haste. And the men returned and told the king.

Then the people went out to the camp of the Syrians and brought away all the goods the Syrians had left. So the famine was at an end, for there was plenty of food in the city. And the king appointed the lord on whose arm he leaned, and who would not believe Elisha, to have the charge of the gate and keep the people in order. But the crowd was so great that he was thrown down and trodden under foot. So Elisha's prophecy was fulfilled; though he saw the end of the famine he did not taste the food that removed it.

Then Elisha spoke to the woman whose son he had restored to life, and said, Go, thou and thine household, and live where you can, for the Lord will send a famine on the land which will last seven years. And the woman did as Elisha told her; and she went to the land of the Philistines, where she lived for seven years. Then she came again to the land of Israel, but found that the house and the land she had left had been taken from her.

And she went with her son to Jehoram to beg of him that they migth be given back to her. When she came to the king's court Gehazi, the servant of Elisha, was there; and the king talked with him, saying, Tell me, I pray thee, all the great things that Elisha hath done. And as he was telling how Elisha had brought the dead to life, the woman came in to speak with the king. And Gehazi said, O king, this is the woman, and this is her son whom Elisha restored to life. And when the king asked the woman about it, she said it was so. Then he commanded one of his officers to give back to the woman her house and her land, and enough money to pay for the fruit, the vegetables, and the grain that had grown in her fields since she had left the land even until now.

And Elisha came to Damascus, where Benhadad the king of Syria lived. And the king was sick; and when he heard that Elisha was in the city he said to Hazael, one of his officers, Take a present in thine hand, and go meet Elisha the prophet, and bid him ask of God if I shall get well of my sickness. So Hazael went to meet him, and took a present with him of money, and of all the good things of Damascus forty camels' burden.

And he came and stood before Elisha, and said, Behadad, King of Syria, hath sent me to ask thee if he will get well of his sickness. Elisha said to Hazael, Tell the king he may recover, and yet the Lord hath shown me that he will die. Then Elisha looked at Hazael for so long a time without speaking that Hazael was confused. And Elisha wept. Hazael said, Why weepeth my lord? Elisha answered, Because I know the wicked things thou wilt do to the children of Israel: their cities wilt thou set on fire, and their young

men wilt thou slay with the sword, and their women and children will be cruelly put to death.

Hazael was astonished, and said, What, is thy servant a dog, that he should do this thing? Elisha answered, The Lord hath chosen thee to be king over Syria.

So Hazael went back to the king Benhadad, who asked him, saying, What said Elisha to thee? And he answered, He told me that thou shouldest surely recover. And on the morrow he took a thick cloth and dipped it in water, and spread it over the king's face so that he could not breathe. And Benhadad, king of Syria, died, and Hazael reigned in his stead.

Elisha called one of the sons of the prophets, and said to him, Carry this horn of oil with thee and go to Ramoth-gilead, and there look for Jehu, the son of Jehoshaphat, take him to an inner chamber, and pour the oil on his head and say, Thus saith the Lord, I have anointed thee king over Israel. Then open the door, and flee, and stay not.

So the young man went to Ramoth-gilead, and found the captains of the army sitting together with Jehu among them. And he said, I have a message for thee, O captain. Jehu said, For which one of us? The young man answered, For thee, O captain.

Then Jehu rose up and went with him into the house, and the young man poured the oil on his head and said to him, The Lord hath anointed thee to be king over Israel. And after thou art made king thou shalt smite the family of Ahab, the whole house of Ahab shall perish as did the house of Jeroboam. And the dogs shall eat Jezebel in the city of Jezreel, and there shall be none to bury her. When the young man had spoken these words, he opened the door of the house and fled.

Jehu went back again to the servants of his lord, and one asked him, Wherefore came this mad fellow to thee? Jehu answered, He told me that the Lord anointed me to be king over Israel. Then the captains all made haste to spread their mantles at his feet, and they blew with trumpets, saying, Jehu is king!

And Jehu said, Let no one go to Jezreel to tell Jehoram

what we have done. Then Jehu stepped into his chariot and rode to Jezreel, which was at some distance from Ramoth-gilead. As he came near the city, a watchman on the tower of the king's palace saw him, and those who were with him, And told Jehoram of it. Jehoram said, Send a horseman to meet them, and let him ask whether they come for peace or for war.

So there went out a man on horseback to meet Jehu, and when he met him he said, Are you coming for peace? Jehu answered, What hast thou to do with peace? and commanded him to fall behind his chariot and follow him.

Then Jehoram sent another man out, who came and asked the same question, and received the same answer.

When Jehoram found that the men did not come back with any word, he had his own chariot made ready, and rode out himself to meet Jehu. And when he came to him he said, Is it peace, Jehu? Jehu answered, What peace while the sins of thy mother Jezebel are so many?

When Jehoram heard this he turned the horses of his chariot and fled. But Jehu drew a bow with his full strength and shot an arrow through Jehoram's heart, and he fell dead in his chariot. Then Jehu told his captain to throw Jehoram's dead body out on the ground. And he threw it in the vineyard that Ahab, Jehoram's father, had taken from Naboth. Then Jehu came to the city of Jezreel. And Jezebel, Jehoram's mother, heard of it, and she put on her jewels and all her royal attire, and painted her face and looked out of a window. And as Jehu entered the gate she spoke to him. He looked up at her and said to the men that were with her, Who is on my side? And two or three of her officers stepped forward and looked out at him. And Jehu said to them, Throw her down. So they threw her out of the window, and some of her blood sprinkled on the wall and on the horses of Jehu's chariot; and he trod her under foot.

And Jehu caused all the familly of Ahab to be put to death. So all the words of Elijah came true that he had spoken so many years before. Of Jezebel he said, The dogs shall eat Jezebel by the wall of Jezreel. And when Jehu ordered her body to be taken up and decently buried, because she was a

king's daughter, behold there was nothing left of her but a few bones.

Yet Jehu did not do these things because he loved God, and wished to obey him, but because he wanted to be great and to make himself a king. He did not care to please God, but did wickedly like other kings who lived before him. He

THE DEATH OF JEZEBEL.

reigned for twenty-eight years; and then he died, and Jehoahaz his son was made king over Israel.

Jehoahaz was as wicked a king as his father, and did not care to please or obey God. And the anger of the Lord was kindled against him and the people of Israel, and he delivered them into the hand of Hazael king of Syria, who had murdered Benhadad in order to obtain the throne. And Hazael did unto them as Elisha predicted he would. He burned their

cities, slew their young men with the sword, and cruelly put to death the women and children. He destroyed the army of Israel, and left but fifty horsemen, ten chariots, and ten thousand soldiers, so that they would not be able to rise up against him. Jehoahaz reigned seventeen years, when he died, and Jehoash his son was made king over Israel.

Now Elisha was sick and nigh unto death. And Jehoash, the king, came down to see him, and stood and wept over him. Elisha said to him, Take bow and arrows. And he took bow and arrows. And Elisha said, Put thine hand upon the bow. And the king put his hand on the bow, and Elisha put his hands on the king's hands. Elisha said, Open the window eastward. And he opened it. Then Elisha said, Shoot; and the king shot. Then Elisha told the king that this was a sign that he should win the victory over the Syrians, and set the children of Israel free.

Then Elisha said to the king again, Take the arrows. And he took them. And he said to the king of Israel, Strike them on the ground. And the king struck them on the ground three times, and then stopped. And Elisha was angry with him, and said, Thou shouldst have smitten five or six times, for then wouldst thou have smitten the Syrians till they were consumed; whereas now thou shalt smite Syria but thrice.

And Elisha was ninety years old when he died; and they buried him. After this the Moabites came into the land to rob the people of Israel. And as some of the people were on their way to bury a man, they saw a band of these Moabites coming toward them. Being afraid they might fall into their hands, they did not go on to the grave that had been made ready for the man, but lowered him in haste to Elisha's grave, which was quite near. As soon as the dead body touched the bones of Elisha, the man came to life again, and stood upon his feet.

CHAPTER XXVI.

THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

After the death of Elisha, his prophecy was fulfilled Jehoash was victorious over the Syrians three times, but as the prophet also said, he could not wholly subdue them. Jehoash reigned sixteen years, and he died and was buried in Samaria; and Jeroboam, his son, reigned in his stead. The people of Israel had been hard pressed by their enemies, and were in great trouble, and in need of help. So God was good to them, and gave Jeroboam strength to overcome the Syrians, and to take from them two of their cities, Damascus and Hamah. Yet the people did not thank God, or repent of their sins, but kept on worshipping the two golden calves, and increasing in wickedness.

Then the Lord sent a prophet named Amos to warn them. And when Amos came he told the children of Israel that there was no other people on the earth whom God loved as well as he did them. They were his chosen ones. But they had loved evil and not good. They had been cruel to the poor, had robbed and cheated one another, and been guilty of many crimes. God had already punished them in the past with plagues of all sorts, hoping they would turn to him and repent, and he would forgive them.

Then Amaziah, who was the chief priest at Bethel in the temple of Baal, sent to Jeroboam, saying, Amos is speaking against thee to the children of Israel. For he says, Jeroboam shall be slain, and the people of Israel taken captive.

And Amaziah said to Amos, O thou seer, go away into the land of Judah, and prophesy there. But prophesy no more in the place where King Jeroboam comes to worship.

Then Amos said to Amaziah, I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son, but I was an herdsman and a gatherer of sycamore fruit. And the Lord came to me and said, Go prophesy unto my people Israel. Therefore, Amaziah, hear thou the word of the Lord. Thou sayest, Prophesy not against the

people of Israel; but thus saith the Lord, Thy wife shall go away and leave thee; thy sons and thy daughters shall fall by the sword; and thou shalt die in a polluted land.

The prophets Hosea and Joel also spoke to the people of Israel, in the days of King Jeroboam, and told them of the punishment in store for them, if they did not repent of their sins and give their hearts to God. Yet they would not listen to these good men, nor give up the worship of the golden calves. And Jeroboam reigned forty-one years, when he died, and Zachariah, his son, was made king in his stead.

Zachariah was king of Israel but six months; for Shallum rebelled against him and slew him. Shallum took the throne himself, but reigned only one month; for Menahem came up from Tirzah and killed him, and became king of Israel in his place. Menahem was king for ten years, and treated the people of Israel most cruelly. When Pul, the king of Assyria, came against them, Menahem took sides with him, and forced the people to pay him large sums of money, in order to save their land from destruction. Menahem died, and his son, Pekahiah, reigned in his stead. But Pekah, a captain of his, hid in the king's palace with Argob, Arieh, and fifty men from Gilead, and he killed Pekahiah, and was made king of Israel in his stead. After Pekah had reigned twenty years, Hoshea, the son of Elah, rebelled against him and killed him.

Hoshea reigned over Israel in Samaria, and like many before him did that which was evil in the sight of the Lord. Against him came Shalmaneser, king of Assyria, and Hoshea became his servant and gave him presents. And the king of Assyria found conspiracy in Hoshea; for he had sent messengers to So, king of Egypt, and brought no present to the king of Assyria, as he had done year by year: therefore the king of Assyria shut him up, and bound him in prison.

Though the tribes of Judah and Benjamin lived apart from the rest, they also did wickedly and displeased God. When Hoshea, was king of Israel, Ahaz was king of Judah, and the most wicked of the eleven kings that had reigned in that land. He died at the age of thirty-six years, and his son Hezekiah was made king of Judah.

Hezekiah loved God, and tried to do what was right, and to obey him in all things. The heathen people built altars on high places, and among the trees, where they worshipped false gods. Hezekiah pulled down these altars, cut down the groves, and broke in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, and which the children of Israel worshipped.

And the Lord was with him, and blessed him and helped him to win a victory over the Philistines.

But when Hezekiah had been king for fourteen years, the king of Assyria came up against Judah and destroyed all the walled cities. And he made threats of laying siege to

ATTACKING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

Jerusalem, and destroying that city also. Hezekiah, through fear, promised to obey the haughty monarch, and to pay him whatever he said should be the price of peace. And he gave him all the silver and gold that was in the house of the Lord, and in his own house, but this only satisfied him for a time.

The prophet Isaiah spoke to the people of Judah and Jerusalem, and told them that God would punish them severely if they did not repent of their sins. He said, Learn to do well; seek after wisdom; and be kind to the poor, the widow, and the fatherless. Though your sins be as scarlet they shall be

as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

And Isaiah made songs for the people, and told them of One who was to come to be their Saviour, and to deliver them from their enemies.

The king of Assyria was most vain of his success, and thought that nothing could stand against his soldiers and his chariots. And he boasted of what he had done in the past, and of what he should do in the future, making himself almost equal with God.

Now Hezekiah had taken pains to prevent the Assyrians from finding water near Jerusalem. But the king of Assyria boasted that by digging deep wells he had found water where none had ever been found before; and that he had even brought water from the rock. He took a great deal of glory to himself, and gave none to God, nor did he listen to Isaiah's prophecies concerning his own downfall. His enemies had fallen before him as grass before the scythe, nay, they dried up as grass on the house-tops, or as corn blasted before it is grown up.

But the Lord knew Sennacherib's thoughts and plans, and was about to deal with him by force, as if he were a stubborn ox or mule. He would fasten a hook in his nose, and a bridle in his mouth, and let him know that there was One mightier than he, and send him home beaten and disgraced.

Sennacherib, being busy elsewhere, sent Rabshakeh, one of his generals, with a large army against Jerusalem. And Rabshakeh said to the people of Israel, Hear ye the words of my master, the great king of Assyria: Let not Hezekiah deceive you, for he shall not be able to save you. Neither let him make you put your trust in the Lord. But come with me, and every one of you shall sit under his own vine and fig-tree.

But the people of Israel answered not, for their king had commanded them to say nothing to the Assyrians. But when Hezekiah heard what Rabshakeh had said he rent his clothes and put on sackcloth, and went to the temple to pray unto the Lord. And he sent messengers to Isaiah the prophet, asking him to pray for the few that were left of the children of Israel. Isaiah sent word to Hezekiah not to be afraid of the

king of Assyria, but to trust in God, and believe in His promise to save Jerusalem for His own sake, and for David's sake.

And Hezekiah read the letter, and took it with him to the temple of the Lord, and prayed earnestly there. He mentioned the deeds of Sennacherib, king of Assyria, and cried out, Now, therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand,

THE DESTROYING ANGEL SLAYING THE ASSYRIANS.

that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou only art the Lord.

And that very night the angel of the Lord went through the camp of the Assyrians, and in the morning one hundred and eighty-five thousand of their men lay cold in death. And Rabshakeh was among them. The rest fled to Nineveh, where Sennacherib lived.

And one day when the king of Assyria was offering sacri-

fices to Nisroch, the god in whom he trusted, two of his sons came up and killed him with their swords. And another son, Esarhaddon, reigned in his place.

Now Hezekiah was taken sick, and death seemed very near. And Isaiah came to see him, and told him to settle all his affairs, for he had not long to live. And Hezekiah turned his face to the wall, and prayed to God, and wept sorely, for it was the wish of his heart to lead his people to victory.

And God heard his prayer, and he recovered from his sickness, and lived fifteen years longer. In the meantime, however, the king of Babylon sent letters and a present to Hezekiah, for he had heard of his sickness. Hezekiah was so pleased with these attentions, that he showed the messengers his treasures, and the armor, and all the weapons of warfare that he possessed. These men were idolaters, and Hezekiah should have told them about God, and the wonders He had performed, and showed them how sinful it was to worship idols, or to bow down before the sun, moon, or stars. For these Chaldeans were sun-worshippers.

Afterwards Isaiah came to King Hezekiah and asked him, saying, What said these men? and from what place did they come? Hezekiah said, They are from the far country of Babylon. Isaiah said, What have they seen in thy house? And Hezekiah answered, Everything; there is nothing that I have not showed them.

Then Isaiah said, Hear the word of the Lord. The time shall come when all that is left of Israel, all the treasures of the palace, and the riches of the city, shall be carried into Babylon. And some of their young men shall serve in the palace of the king of Babylon. And Hezekiah knew then that he had done wrong, and grieved over the fall in store for the people of Israel. And God was good to Hezekiah, and blessed the land with peace and prosperity during his reign. And the people loved God and tried to please Him. And the king was thought much of, and was called "the good King Hezekiah," for there was none like him among all the kings of Judah.

Hezekiah reigned twenty-nine years, and at his death Manasseh, his son, was made king of Judah. Manasseh did

JOSIAH THE BOY KING.

not follow the example of his father, but was more wicked even than Ahab, king of Israel. He built up the heathen altars that his father had pulled down, and set up altars and temples everywhere, even in Jerusalem, for the worship of idols, some of which were wood and stone, and others the sun, moon, and stars.

And he crucified his own son on the altar of Moloch, the god of fire, and compelled the people to throw their infants into the flames, in order to secure the good-will of Moloch. Neither the king nor the people listened to the prophet whom the Lord sent to warn them, and one day some captains of the king of Assyria came upon Manasseh in a field, and bound him and carried him captive to Babylon.

After a while he felt that this was a just punishment for his sins, and he prayed to God, and was very humble and penitent. And God forgave Manasseh, and brought him back again to Jerusalem. And he praised God with a thankful heart.

Manasseh reigned fifty-five years in Jerusalem, and then died, and his son Amon was made king in his place. Amon was twenty-two years old when he began to reign, and he did most wickedly. But he was soon cut off in his sins, for at the end of two years he was murdered by some of his own household. And Josiah his son reigned in his stead.

Josiah was but eight years old when he began to reign. He was a good king, and destroyed the idols that were so plenty in Judah and Jerusalem. He also put the temple of Jerusalem in order, and restored the worship to its former splendor. And the people did not have to be taxed, but brought money willingly to Josiah, and helped him all they could.

And the high priest found the book of the law which was written by Moses on Mount Sinai. And when Shaphan the scribe read the word of God to king Josiah, the king was astonished and ashamed. He saw more clearly the guilt of the people and the danger they were in. Copies of the law had been made by the scribes and given to the children of Israel, but all the commandments of God had not been written out. And the king was sorrowful, and sent the high

priest and others to a prophetess, named Huldah, to inquire about it. Jeremiah and Zephaniah were prophets at this time, but not so well known or so close at hand.

Huldah told the priests that the words of the book were true; and Jerusalem would surely be destroyed, because the children of Israel had not obeyed God. But because Josiah was a good man, and loved God, and tried to do what was right, the punishment should not take place until after his death.

Josiah called the people together at Jerusalem, and celebrated the feasts and the Passover in a style of great magnificence, hoping to save the city from its doom. But it was all too late. The hour of mercy had passed.

Afterwards the king of Egypt sought to pass through Judea and Syria, but Josiah would not allow it, and went out to fight against him. The battle took place at Megiddo, and Josiah was wounded with arrows, and died as he was being taken back to Jerusalem. He was then forty years of age, and had made himself so beloved that there was more sorrow over his death than over any other of the kings of Israel. His son Jehoahaz reigned in his stead, but did not follow the teachings of his father. He was by some means taken prisoner by Pharaoh and sent to Egypt, where he ended his days. And Pharaoh made Eliakim, another son of Josiah, king, and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And he also did wickedly.

Jehoiakim commanded the prophet Jeremiah to write down all the words that God spoke to him. And he did so; and as he was shut up and could not go to the temple himself, he chose Baruch, one of the chief men at court, to copy the words of God, and to read them to the people on the fast-day. When the roll of parchment was brought to the king, he read a few pages, and then cut the roll with a penknife, and threw it into the fire that was on the hearth, and gave orders that Baruch and Jeremiah should be seized and punished. But they escaped.

When Zedekiah was made king, he secretly sent for Jeremiah, and asked him, Is there any word from the Lord? Jeremiah said, There is, for thou shalt be delivered into the hands of the king of Babylon.

Then Zedekiah commanded that Jeremiah should be placed in the court of the prison, and given a piece of bread every day as long as it lasted. Here he continued to prophesy. Some of the princes heard Jeremiah say that those who stayed in the city should die by the sword, or by famine or pestilence, but those who fled to the Chaldeans should live. For the Lord had said that Jerusalem should fall into the hands of the king of Babylon. And they begged Zedekiah to put the prophet to death, because such words took the heart out of the people and made them unfit to go to war.

The king told these persons to do as they chose with Jeremiah, and they threw the prophet into a pit where there was no water, but the mud was deep. And they left him there to die.

Ebedmelech, a negro who waited upon the king, hearing that they had put Jeremiah in a dungeon, or pit, spoke to Zedekiah and told him what the princes had done. And he said that Jeremiah would soon die if left where he was. Then the king commanded Ebedmelech to take thirty men with him and bring the prophet. So Ebedmelech took the men with him, and when they came to the pit they let down by ropes the old cloths and soft rags they had brought. And they told Jeremiah to put the cloths under his arms so that the ropes would not cut into his flesh. And Jeremiah did so. And they drew him out of the pit, and took him back to the court of the prison.

Jeremiah wept over the sins and the sorrows of his people until he was almost blind, and had no more tears to shed. And he wrote down all his sad thoughts in a book, which is called the Lamentations of Jeremiah. His greatest grief was that God was angry with the children of Israel.

After Josiah's death the king of Egypt had conquered the king of Babylon, and the Israelites were also in his power. But not long after, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, came up and won a victory over the Egyptians and drove them out of the land. Then he besieged Jerusalem and took Jehoiakim captive and sent him in chains to Babylon. He then took all the silver and gold from the temple, and carried off the chief persons—princes, soldiers, skilled workmen, and learned

men—to the number of ten thousand, and left none but the poorest sort of people in the land.

The king of Babylon made Zedekiah, the youngest son of

KING NEBUCHADNEZZAR.

Josiah, king of Judah, and made him promise to be faithful to him. But he was not a good man, and did not keep his word. He rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, and was tried as a traitor and found guilty. His sons were slain before his

eyes, his eyes were then put out, and he was carried captive to Babylon, where he died.

Jerusalem was so strongly built that Nebuchadnezzar found it no easy matter to destroy the city. For eleven years or more the hosts of Babylon laid siege to it, but it could not be taken until the Jews were so weakened by hunger that they

DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM.

could not hold out any longer. For there was no bread in the land. The Jews fled into Egypt, and Nebuchadnezzar broke down the walls of Jerusalem and destroyed the city by fire. The magnificent temple built by Solomon, which had stood for four hundred and twenty-four years, was not spared, and everything took place according to the words of Moses and the later prophets.

CHAPTER XXVII.

DANIEL.

Among the Jews that were taken captive into Babylon were four young men, named Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. They were fine-looking, well-formed, and intelligent, and that they might be fitted to fill high positions at the court of King Nebuchadnezzar, they were sent to school for three years to learn the language of the Chaldeans, and to finish their education. And that they might be kept in good health and strength, meat and wine were sent them every day from the king's table.

But Daniel and his friends refused to eat the meat or drink the wine that came from the king's table, and Daniel begged the officer who had the young men in charge not to force them to do so. The officer was friendly to Daniel, but afraid that he might lose his own life should the king come and find the young men looking thin and in poor health. For he would think his orders had not been obeyed.

Daniel said to Melzar, the officer, Try us for ten days, I pray thee, and let them give us nothing but pulse and water. (Pulse is a thick pap made of meal.) And then, said Daniel, if we do not thrive as well as those who eat the meat and drink the wine, you can stop giving it to us. Melzar consented, and at the end of ten days the four young Jews were in better condition than those who ate the food sent from the king's table. And so they lived only on pulse and water, and did not sin by eating food prepared by idolaters.

God gave the four young men great knowledge and skill; and he gave Daniel power to understand and explain the meaning of dreams and visions. And when all the young students were brought before the king to be examined by him, he found none to equal Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. And found they had much more wisdom than all the magicians and astrologers with which his realm abounded.

Now in the second year of his reign Nebuchadnezzar was troubled with strange dreams that would not let him sleep.

And he commanded all the magicians, astrologers, and sorcerers, and the Chaldeans also, to tell him what the dreams meant.

The Chaldeans said, O king, live forever; tell us thy dream and we will show thee the meaning of it. The king answered, I cannot remember it, and if ye cannot make known my dream ye shall be put to death and your houses burned to the ground. But if ye tell the dream and what it means, ye shall receive rich gifts and great honors.

The Chaldeans said there was no man living who could interpret a dream without first having had the dream told to him; and no king had ever before asked such a thing of any magician, astrologer, or Chaldean. Only the gods could tell the king what he wanted to know.

Then the king was very angry, and commanded that all the wise men of Babylon should be put to death. And when Daniel heard of it he asked that he might see the king. And when he stood before Nebuchadnezzar, Daniel told him if he would give him time he would tell the king his dream and the meaning of it.

Then Daniel went home and told his companions what he had done, and asked them to pray that God would spare their lives. And in the night God made known to Daniel the dream of Nebuchadnezzar, and told him the meaning of it. And Daniel gave thanks and praise to God, from whom nothing is hid, and who blesses all those who put their trust in him.

Therefore Daniel went in unto Arioch, whom the king had commanded to kill the wise men, and he said to him, Kill not the wise men of Babylon, but bring me in to the king and I will show him the meaning of his dream. Then Arioch made haste and brought him before Nebuchadnezzar. And the king said to Daniel, Art thou able to tell me my dream and the meaning of it?

Daniel answered, None of the king's wise men can tell his dream; but there is a God in heaven who sends dreams to Nebuchadnezzar, to show him what will take place at some future time. I did not find out thy dream myself, but God made it known to me, and I will tell it to thee for thine own good, and for his glory.

DANIEL AND HIS COMPANIONS REFUSING WINE.

Thou, O king, saw a great and shining image, whose shape was most terrible to behold. Its head was of gold, its breast and arms of silver, its body and thighs of brass, its legs of iron, and its feet part iron and part clay. While thou didst

NEBUCHADNEZZAR'S DREAM.

gaze upon it a stone, thrown by invisible hands, struck the image on the feet and broke them in pieces.

And the whole image fell and was ground to powder, and the stone that struck it became a great mountain and filled the whole earth. This is the dream; and now I will tell thee

the meaning of it. Thou art a great king, and God hath given thee thy kingdom and all thy power and glory. Thou art the head of gold. But after thee shall come other kings, as different from thee as brass and iron are different from gold, and they shall rule over all the earth.

And in the days of these kings God will set up another kingdom which shall never be destroyed, or fall into the hands of any conqueror, but shall break in pieces and destroy all these kingdoms, and stand forever. The dream was true, Daniel said, and all these things would surely take place.

In fear and astonishment Nebuchadnezzar bowed down before Daniel, and would have offered sacrifices and incense before him as if he a were god. But Daniel would not allow it, and gave all the honor to the God of gods and the Lord of kings.

Then Nebuchadnezzar gave Daniel many gifts, and made him chief minister. And he also, at Daniel's request, made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego rulers in places outside of the city.

Afterwards Nebuchadnezzar made an image of gold, and set it up on the plain of Dura, in honor of Bel, the chief idol of Babylon. And all the chief people were gathered together before the image to hear the king's command. The herald told them that when a certain kind of music was played they were all to fall down and worship the golden image that Nebuchadnezzar had set up. And those who did not obey the king and worship the image would be thrown at once into a burning fiery furnace.

Therefore, when the people heard the music, they fell down and worshipped the image as the king had commanded. But word was brought to Nebuchadnezzar that three of the captive Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego—did not obey the king, and would not bow down and worship the golden image.

The king was very angry when he heard this, and commanded the young men to be brought before him. And he said to them, Is it true, O Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego? do not ye serve my gods, nor worship the golden image which I have set up? And he told them if they were ready now to

worship when the signal was given again, no harm should be done them. But if they worshipped not they should be thrown at once into a fiery furnace. And Nebuchadnezzar said to them, Who is that God that shall deliver you out of my hand?

Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego said to Nebuchadnezzar, Our God whom we serve is able to save us from the fiery furnace, and to deliver us out of thy hand, O king. But if it should not please him to do this, know thou, O king, that we will not serve thy gods at any time, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up.

Then was Nebuchadnezzar in a great rage, and he ordered the furnace to be heated seven times hotter than usual. And he commanded some of the strongest men in his army to bind Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, and throw them into the fiery furnace.

And they were bound with their clothes on, and thrown into the furnace. And the fire was so hot that the flames leaped out and killed the soldiers who had charge of them. And Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego fell down bound together in the midst of the fiery furnace.

Nebuchadnezzar looked toward the furnace and saw a sight that filled him with terror. He sent for his chief officers and said to them, Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? They answered and said, True, O king. And the king said, Lo, I see four men loose, walking through the fire that has not harmed them; and the form of the fourth is like that of a holy angel.

Then Nebuchadnezzar came near the furnace and commanded the young men to come forth. And Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego came out of the fiery furnace, and stood before the king. And multitudes from all parts of the empire came to see them, and found to their great surprise that the flames had not hurt their flesh, nor singed their hair, nor harmed their garments. Nor was there the least smell of fire about them.

Then Nebuchadnezzar praised the God of Israel who had sent his angel to deliver his servants who trusted in him, and who would rather give their bodies to the flame than worship

any God but their own. And he declared that those who dared to speak a word against the God of the Jews should be punished in a terrible manner. And he made Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego governors over all the Jews that were in Babylon.

For some time after this Nebuchadnezzar lived in great peace and prosperity, and expected to end his days quietly and as became a king. But one night he had a dream which filled him with alarm. He dreamed that he saw a tree in the centre of the earth, of such a height and such a size that its top reached to heaven and it could be seen from the very ends of the earth. This tree was covered with an abundance of beautiful leaves, and loaded with an immense quantity of fruit. Its branches formed a shade for the beasts of the field, and places for the birds to build their nests, and all the inhabitants of the earth ate of its fruit.

And an angel came down from heaven and cried aloud: Hew down the tree and cut off his branches: shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit: let the beasts get away from under it, and the birds from his branches. But leave the stump of the tree in the ground with a band of iron and brass around it, where the dew will fall upon it as it does on the beasts that eat the grass of the field.

Let his heart be changed from a man's, and the heart of a beast be given to him, and let this last for seven years.

All the wise men were sent for, but none of them could tell the meaning of the dream. They might have guessed, but would not have dared to mention their thoughts to the king.

Then Daniel was sent for, and when he heard the dream, and knew what terrible things were to come upon the king who had been so kind to him, he was in great distress of mind, and spoke not for a whole hour.

Then the king said to Daniel, Let not the dream nor the interpretation of it trouble thee. And Daniel told the king that the tree so great and strong was himself, for his dominion extended to the end of the earth. Power, fame, wealth, and prosperity were his. But he would lose his mind, and be for a time like a wild beast, and utterly unfit to manage his kingdom. And as he grew worse and worse, he would be

driven from the dwellings of men, and be forced to keep company with the beasts, feeding upon grass as they did and living out of doors in all weathers. This would last for seven years, until Nebuchadnezzar learned that God ruled in the kingdom of men and gave it to whom he pleased.

And as the stump of the tree was to be left in the ground, it was a sign that the kingdom would be given back to him after he came to his senses and owned that God was higher than any earthly king, and to be obeyed by all mankind. And Daniel urged the king to listen kindly to his advice, and to begin at once to lead a good life. And God gave Nebuchadnezzar a whole year in which to repent of his sins and to turn from them. But he did not do so.

One day he was walking through the hanging, or terraced, gardens that formed a part of his magnificent palace. And looking around he said, Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the king's palace, by my own power and for my own glory?

And while he yet spoke there came a voice from heaven, saying, O King Nebuchadnezzar, the kingdom is departed from thee. And thou shalt be driven from among men, and shalt live with the beasts of the field, and eat grass as the oxen for seven years, until thou knowest that God rules the kingdom of men and gives thrones to whom he will.

Immediately Nebuchadnezzar's mind left him, and he became like a beast, so that he was driven out of doors and did eat grass with the oxen. And his hair grew until it covered his body like eagles' feathers; and his nails were like birds' claws.

And at the end of seven years Nebuchadnezzar's reason came back to him, and all his powers of body and mind. And he lifted his eyes to heaven and praised God, and thanked him for sparing his life and restoring him to health.

And he was placed on the throne again, and was more honored and prospered than before. And he declared to the whole world that he should no longer seek his own glory, or worship idols, but should praise and honor the King of heaven, who spoke the words of truth, who dealt both wisely and justly with men, and knew how to bring down those who walked in pride.

Some years after the death of King Nebuchadnezzar, his grandson, Belshazzar, was made king of Babylon. And Belshazzar made a great feast, and invited a thousand of his nobles to eat and drink with him; and it was a great honor for them to sit at the same table with their king.

In the midst of the feasting Belshazzar commanded his

DWELLING WITH THE BEASTS.

servants to bring the gold and silver vessels, which Nebuchadnezzar had taken out of the temple at Jerusalem, that he and his guests might drink out of them. And these sacred vessels were brought, and Belshazzar and his friends drank out of them, and spoke in praise of idols of gold, silver, and brass, and of iron, wood, and stone.

While they were singing their songs, and enjoying their

wild mirth, the fingers of a man's hand appeared on the wall, writing where the light shone brightly on each word. The king saw the hand, and the writing that remained upon the wall, and his face turned pale, and he trembled from head to foot.

And he sent for the magicians and astrologers, and promised to make them rulers in his kingdom, if they would tell the meaning of the handwriting on the wall. But none of the wise men were able to do it, and the king and the nobles were exceedingly astonished.

Belshazzar's mother having been told of the handwriting on the wall came into the room where the feast was spread. And after greeting the king and those who sat with him, she told Belshazzar not to give way to gloomy fears, for though the wise men could not read the writing, he had a man in his kingdom who could. And she spoke of Daniel and told of his wonderful powers, and how he had interpreted Nebuchadnezzar's dreams.

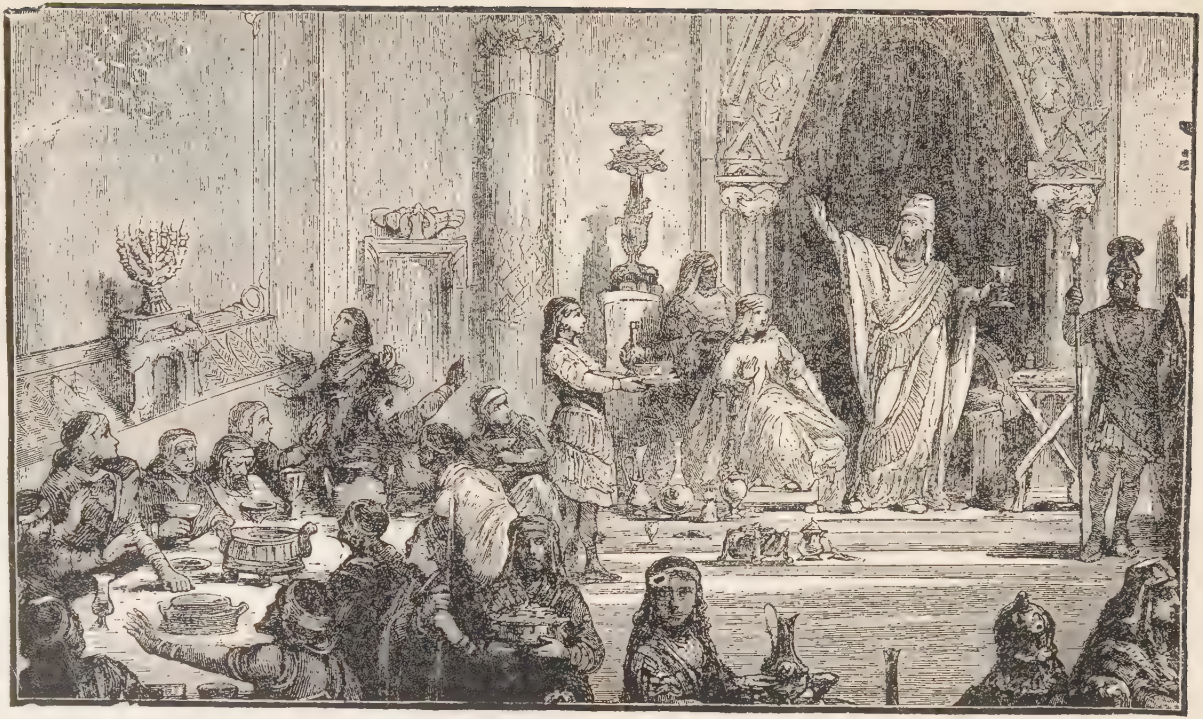
And Daniel was sent for, and when he came before the king, Belshazzar said to him, I have heard of thee, and if thou canst read the writing on the wall and tell me the meaning thereof, thou shalt be clothed in scarlet and have a chain of gold about thy neck and be made third ruler in my kingdom.

Daniel, who was about ninety years old at this time, refused to take any gifts from the king, but said he would read the writing on the wall and tell its meaning.

Then he spoke of Nebuchadnezzar, and how he was lifted up with pride, and how he sinned in not giving God the glory. And the punishment that came upon him, and his repentance, were well known to Belshazzar, but had not kept him from being proud and sinful. And he and his friends had used the sacred vessels in honor of base idols, which was more of an insult to God than anything Nebuchadnezzar had done. And he had not given the least praise to God, to whom he owed his life, and breath, and everything that he enjoyed. And in the midst of his wicked ways when he had done the greatest sin of his life, there came the handwriting on the wall:

MENE, MENE, TEKEL, UPHARSIN.

Daniel said, This is the meaning of it:



THE WRITING ON THE WALL.

MENE; God hath numbered thy kingdom, and finished it.

TEKEL; Thou art weighed in the balance and found wanting.

UPHARSIN; Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians.

Belshazzar understood that God meant to punish him for his sins, by taking his kingdom from him, but he did not think it would take place very soon.

But Daniel knew that his doom was fixed, that there was no time now for the king to repent.

For that very night, Cyrus, king of Persia, marched his army toward Babylon, and finding the gates of brass left open, entered the city and took the palace by surprise before an alarm could be given. Belshazzar was killed, and the whole empire conquered with but little bloodshed. And Darius, the Mede, was made king of Babylon.

Darius had heard of Daniel, whom Belshazzar had made third ruler in his kingdom, and he sent for him that he might be always near him. And he proved to be so wise and good that the king thought to make him chief governor of the kingdom, which had become so large that the king could not attend to it all himself.

The nobles of the court were not pleased at the honors shown to Daniel, and they watched him closely for a chance to speak ill of him to the king. But they could find no fault with him, for his work was always well done, and free from mistakes of any sort.

Then these men said they had no excuse for bringing Daniel before the king, unless it was made a crime to worship God as he did. And they went to the king and got him to make a law that whoever asked a favor of any one, except the king, for thirty days, should be thrown into a den of lions.

And the king signed his name to the writing, that it might stand as the law of the Medes and Persians, which changeth not.

When Daniel heard of the law, and knew that the king had signed it, he went into his house, and his windows being open toward Jerusalem, he knelt down three times a day and prayed and gave thanks to God as he had always done. The

Jews who lived at Jerusalem went to the temple to pray, but those at a distance turned their faces toward Jerusalem, as if gazing on the "holy of holies" while they spoke with God. The stated hours for prayer were nine o'clock in the morning (the hour of the morning sacrifice), t welve o'clock noon, and three o'clock in the afternoon (the hour for evening service).

CYRUS, KING OF PERSIA.

Daniel's enemies kept watch, and found that he was in the habit of praying to his God three times a day. And they went to the king and asked him if he had not made a law that whoever asked a favor of any one, except the king, for thirty days, should be cast into the den of lions. The king said he had made the law, and it could not be changed.

Then the men said that Daniel had paid no heed to the law but had kept on praying three times a day.

When the king heard these words he was vexed with himself for having made such a law, and he tried in every way to save Daniel's life, for he was very fond of him. But the chief men of his court said that no law the king had made could be changed. Therefore the king commanded that Daniel should be thrown into the den of lions. And he spoke to Daniel, and said, Thy God, whom thou dost serve continually, will deliver thee. And a stone was brought and laid at the mouth of the den; and it was sealed with the king's seal, which no one would dare to break.

Then the king, grieved and ashamed, went to the palace, and spent the night fasting; no sound of mirth or music was heard, and yet he could not close his eyes in sleep. The next morning early he went in haste to the den of lions. And when he came to the den, he cried out with a sad voice, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?

Daniel replied, O king, live forever. My God hath sent his angel and shut the lions' mouths, so that they have not hurt me; for he knew that I had not sinned against him, nor done thee any wrong, O king.

Then was the king very glad to find that Daniel was alive and safe, and he commanded that they should take Daniel up out of the den. And he was taken out, and not the least scratch was found upon him, because he believed in God and trusted to his care and protection.

And the king commanded that the enemies of Daniel, with their wives and children, should be thrown into the den of lions. And the lions soon mastered and destroyed them all.

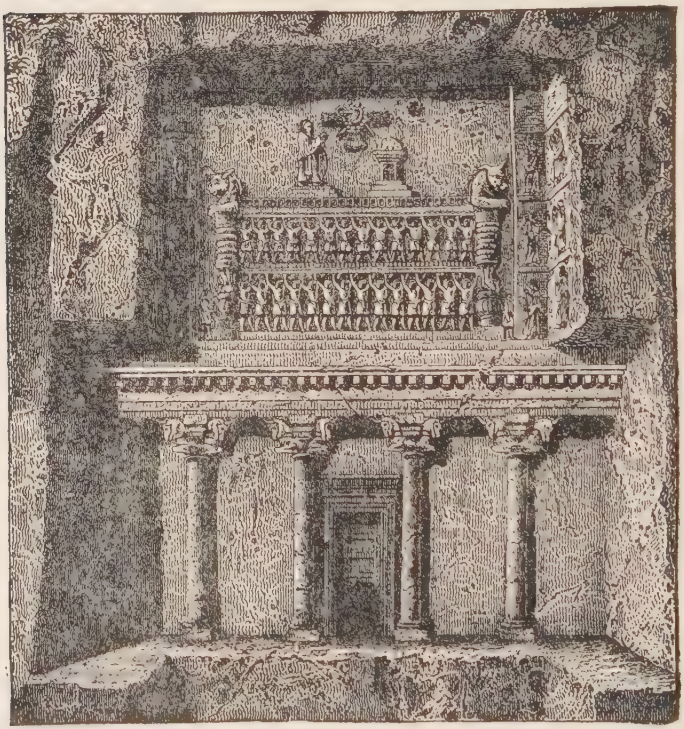
Then King Darius made a law that every one in his kingdom should honor the God of Daniel. For he was the living God, steadfast forever, who had power to work miracles, and had delivered Daniel from the den of lions.

After this Daniel held the highest posts of honor during the reign of Darius, and also of Cyrus. He had a great many wonderful visions which he wrote down in a book, and he was the most celebrated prophet of that period.

DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN.

Daniel lived to a good old age, and during his lifetime many of the Jews made their way back to Palestine and lived there in peace and comfort.

The name Daniel signifies, God is my Judge.



ROCK GRAVE OF DARIUS.

When Darius had been king of the Medes and Persians for two years he died, and Cyrus took his place. In the first year of his reign God put it into his heart to give the captive Jews their freedom.

ARTAXERXES ACCORDING LIBERTY TO THE JEWS.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

REBUILDING THE TEMPLE AT JERUSALEM.

The Jews had been in captivity for seventy years, and the time had now come for them to return to Jerusalem. And God made Cyrus willing to let them go.

Then the words came true that Isaiah had spoken nearly two hundred years before. For he had said that God would raise up a king, Cyrus, who would send the Jews back to Jerusalem to build up the temple and the city. This prediction was made long before the birth of Cyrus and before the Jews were sent into captivity.

And Cyrus caused a proclamation to be read throughout the kingdom, saying, The Lord hath charged me to build up his house in Jerusalem. Who is there among the captives from Judah that wishes to go back to his own land? Let you, his people, go now to Jerusalem also and build up the house of the Lord; and let the people of my kingdom help him with gold and silver, and with camels and clothes.

Then the chief of the fathers of Judah and Benjamin, and the priests and the Levites rose up, and all those whom God made willing to go set out on their journey. And many persons strengthened their hands with vessels of silver and gold, and cattle, and raiment, as the king had commanded.

And Cyrus brought forth the vessels of the house of the Lord which Nebuchadnezzar had brought forth out of Jerusalem, and gave them to the prince of Judah.

And the number of vessels of gold and silver that Cyrus gave to him was five thousand four hundred.

So Zerubbabel took the vessels from Babylon to Jerusalem. And there went with him forty-two thousand three hundred and sixty of the children of Israel, beside their servants, who were seven thousand three hundred and thirty-seven. There were seven hundred and thirty-six horses; two hundred and forty-five mules; four hundred and thirty-five camels, and six thousand seven hundred and twenty asses.

The people gathered at Jerusalem and built the altar of

God. And they asked God for protection against the heathen nations round about. As soon as the altar was built they worshipped God, and offered burnt offerings every day, as Moses had commanded.

Then they began to build the house of the Lord. They hired men of Tyre to bring cedar trees from Mount Lebanon by the sea down to Joppa. And they gave meat, and drink,

FOUNDATION OF THE NEW TEMPLE.

and oil to these men; and they gave money to the masons and carpenters.

When the foundations were laid the priests and Levites played on trumpets and cymbals, and sang together by course in praising the Lord. And the people shouted with a great shout, because the building of the temple was begun. But many of the old men had seen the temple that was there

before, and remembering its beauty they wept with a loud voice. So that the singing and shouting and the sounds of weeping were mingled together, and were heard a long way off.

Now there were living outside of Jerusalem certain people known as Samaritans, who had made homes for themselves on the land once owned by the Jews. They were idolaters, yet they wanted to assist in building the temple, claiming that they worshipped the same God.

But Zerubbabel and Jeshua the high priest, and the chief men of the Jews said to the Samaritans, Ye have nothing to do with us to build our house unto our God. We will build it ourselves, as Cyrus, the king of Persia, has commanded. This answer enraged the Samaritans, and they did all they could to hinder the Jews in their work. And they hired counsellors against them to speak evil of them to the king's officers, and to put a stop to their plans.

After the death of Cyrus, Artaxerxes was made king, and the Samaritans wrote a letter to him, saying, Be it known to thee, O king, that the Jews who came from Babylon are in Jerusalem, building up that wicked city. And if this city be builded and the walls set up again they will not pay tribute to thee as they ought to do, and so the reverence of the kings will be lessened. Therefore, as we are grateful to the king, and do not wish him to be disobeyed, we send this letter, that he may search and know that this city is a rebellious city and troublesome unto the kings.

The king replied to the Samaritans, saying, Peace be unto thee. The letter which you wrote has been plainly read before me. And I have made inquiry, and find that Jerusalem has always been a rebellious city. Therefore command these men of Judah to cease, for the city shall not be built until permission is given by me. Then the Samaritans went to Jerusalem, and made the people stop building by force. And there was no more work done on the temple so long as Artaxerxes was on the throne.

After the death of Artaxerxes, Darius reigned. In the meantime the Jews had built houses for themselves to live in, and were so interested in this work that they did not give

CYRUS RETURNS THE VASES OF THE TEMPLE.

much attention to finishing the temple of the Lord. And the Lord was displeased with them, and sent the prophet Haggai to them, who came and said, Thus saith the Lord, You say the time has not come to build the Lord's house. Is it time for you, O ye, to dwell in your ceiled houses, and this house lie waste? Because you have left my house in ruins, and made haste to build your own houses, I have not blessed you, and you have not prospered. Now, therefore, go up to the mountain and get wood, and build the house, and I will take pleasure in it. And the people did as the Lord commanded, and began to build the house.

But when the Samaritans saw it they came to Zerubbabel and Jeshua, and said to them, Who hath commanded you to build this house and to make up this wall? And Zerubbabel and Jeshua told them, King Cyrus ordered us to come back to our native land and to build this temple. And he gave us the vessels of gold and silver that Nebuchadnezzar took out of the temple and carried to Babylon, and said to us, Take them to Jerusalem, and let the house of the Lord be builded there.

Still continuing their persecutions, the Samaritans told Darius, the chief ruler of Babylon, what the Jews were doing and wanted him to search the records of the kingdom, and find out whether Cyrus had told them to build the temple, as they said he did.

In searching the records, they found that Cyrus had told them to do so, and decreed it also.

Cyrus also had told them to bring back the gold and silver vessels which Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple.

Darius having learned all this from the documents of Cyrus, would not allow the Samaritans to hinder the Jews any more in building a house in which to worship God.

He made a decree also that part of the taxes which the Samaritans paid to the king should be given to the Jews to assist in building the temple, that they should give them young bullocks, rams, and lambs for burnt offerings, and also wheat, salt, wine, and oil, as they were needed.

Darius also made a decree that whoever should change

these decrees should be hanged on a gallows and his house be laid in ruins.

The Samaritans did as the king told them, because they were afraid to disobey him. They did not interfere with the Jews again, but gave them the animals they needed for sacrifice, and all that the king commanded.

There was a man named Ezra who was a priest of God, a teacher of the law of Moses, and a true servant of God. He lived in Babylon when Artaxerxes reigned in Persia. He was a Jew, and loved his people, and was anxious to instruct them in the laws and ways of God and that the people should obey the laws and thus insure the favor of God.

The king not only allowed him to go to Jerusalem, but he told him to carry with him the silver and gold, which the king and his counsellors had offered to God.

With this money Ezra was to buy animals for sacrifices, and meat offerings, and drink offerings. The vessels which they gave him for God's service they were to present before the Lord at Jerusalem, and the king said that whatever they needed should be taken out of the king's treasure-house.

The king also gave orders that all the treasuries in the provinces beyond the river, to which Ezra was going, should give him an hundred talents of silver, an hundred measures of wheat, an hundred butts of wine, an hundred butts of oil, and salt, without prescribing how much.

Artaxerxes said that whatever God had commanded should be done, so that his displeasure should not rest upon his realms and his sons.

Ezra was commanded by the king to set magistrates and judges, who should judge the people beyond the river—that is, in the land of Judah—and who should teach the law to those who did not understand it. He was also to execute judgment, either by death, banishment to a strange land, or by taking from them their goods, or by imprisonment, all who would not do the law of God and the law of the king.

Ezra rejoiced, and was grateful to God, who had so turned the heart of the king towards him, and who had given him such a deep interest in the work of building the temple.

It was now about time for Ezra to leave Babylon, but

before leaving, he gathered together some of the priests and Levites, and the chief men of the Jews by the river Ahava, where they lived in tents three days.

He proclaimed a fast before the Lord, and sought of him the right way, and asked that his protecting care might be over them.

Ezra was ashamed to ask the king that a band of soldiers and horsemen might go with them, because he had told the king that God would ever protect those who sought his face.

So God saw the fasting of Ezra and his company, and he heard their prayers. Then all those who had come from Babylon with Ezra, and who had been saved from their enemies, offered up sacrifices to God at Jerusalem: twelve bullocks, ninety-six rams, seventy-seven lambs, and twelve goats, and they gave the king's letters unto the king's officers and governors, who ruled over the provinces, and they helped the people in building the house of God, according to the command of the king.

At this time the people began to disobey the Lord, and to make friends with the heathen and take heathen women for their wives, and the princes and rulers were chief in the trespass.

When Ezra heard of it he rent his garments and mantle, and plucked off the hair of his head and of his beard, and was sad and astonished. Then all those persons who feared God were afraid lest God would punish the people for their disobedience.

Ezra sat astonished until the evening sacrifice was offered in the temple. Then he went up to the house of the Lord, and knelt down and spread out his hands unto the Lord, and said, O my God, I am ashamed, and blush to lift up my face to thee, for our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens. Since the days of our fathers we have sinned against thee, and because of our sins thou hast let our enemies triumph over us, and we have been delivered to the sword, captivity, spoil, and confusion of face. But thou hast showed us mercy and put it in the heart of the king of Persia to allow us to come back and build the temple at Jerusalem.

And now, O our God, what shall we say after this? for we have forsaken thy commandments; we have made friends with the people of Canaan and taken wives from among them. O Lord, thou art good, for thou dost permit us still to live.

When Ezra had prayed and confessed, weeping and casting himself down before the house of God, a great crowd of men, women, and children gathered around him, weeping very sore for the sins which had been committed.

Then Shechaniah, one of the chief men of Israel, replied to Ezra and said, We have trespassed against our God, and taken strange wives of the people of the land; yet there is hope for us, if we promise to put away our wives. Be of good courage. Ezra, command us, and we will obey thee.

Then Ezra stood up, and made the priests, Levites, and all the people confess their sins, and promise to renounce them. And the people were told that whoever would not assemble within three days at Jerusalem to join in confession of their sins to God, their property would be taken from them.

So the people came within the three days, and when they were assembled, Ezra said to them, Ye have transgressed and have taken strange wives to increase the trespass of Israel. Now make confession unto the Lord God of your fathers, and obey him. Separate yourselves from the people of the land, and from the strange wives.

Then all the congregation answered with a loud voice, As thou hast said, so must we do.

But as there was much rain, so that the people could not remain together, they asked Ezra to set a time when those who had taken heathen wives should come before the rulers and be judged by them, and told what they should do, that the fierce wrath of God might be turned away from them.

And Ezra and some of the rulers, on the first day of the tenth month, sat down to examine the matter. And those who had heathen wives confessed their sin, and promised to put it away.

And there were so many who came to confess and promise amendment that it took the rulers three months to take down their names, and to tell them what they should do.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ESTHER.

When the Jews, as a people, returned to Jerusalem, there were some of them that remained scattered throughout Persia, of which country Ahasuerus was king.

Ahasuerus lived in his palace in Shushan, and in the third year of his reign he made a magnificent feast, to which he invited all the nobles and princes of his kingdom.

The feast lasted one hundred and eighty days, and afterwards the king made a feast for all the people that were in Shushan, great and small.

This feast lasted seven days and was held in the court that looked out upon a garden of the king's palace.

Rich curtains of white, green, and blue hung upon the marble pillars. The couches were of gold and silver, and the floor of various colored stones.

The guests reclined at table and drank, from vessels of gold, as much wine as they pleased.

And Vashti the queen also made a feast for the women of Shushan.

On the seventh day of the feast, when the heart of the king was merry with wine, he commanded the seven chamberlains that waited upon him to bring Vashti into his presence.

She was to wear the crown-royal to show the people and the princes her beauty. But Vashti refused to obey the king's command, and the seven chamberlains went back to the king without her.

This made the king very angry, and he asked his wise men, What shall we do with the queen Vashti because she has not performed the commandment. Memucan, one of the wise men, said, Vashti has done wrong, not to the king only, but also to all the princes and people of the kingdom. For this deed of the queen shall come abroad unto all women, so that they shall despise their husbands in their eyes.

VASHTI REFUSING TO OBEY THE KING'S ORDER.

If it please the king, let him make a royal decree, and let it be written among the laws of the Persians and Medes that it be not altered, that Vashti come no more before the king, and let the king make another woman queen that is better than she.

And when the king's command is published throughout his great empire all wives shall honor their husbands, both great and small, and will obey their commands.

And the saying pleased the king and his friends; and the king sent letters into all the provinces of his kingdom, written in the language spoken by the people, so that all might understand.

And it was made a law that every man should rule in his own house.

After a while the king's anger cooled, and his affection for Vashti returned, for he was very fond of her, and felt he had not treated her kindly; but he could not change the law he had made.

Then some of the king's servants said to him, Let the king command that all the handsome unmarried women of the kingdom be brought to the palace of Shushan and placed in the care of Hege, the king's chamberlain.

Now there was at Shushan a certain Jew named Mordecai, and he had a cousin named Esther, who was exceedingly beautiful.

When her father and mother died Mordecai took care of her as if she had been his own daughter. When the maidens were gathered to the palace, and placed in the care of Hege, according to the king's command, Esther was among them. And she pleased the keeper of the women so much, that he was more kind to her than the rest, and gave her the best room in the house, and seven maids to wait upon her. And no one knew where she came from or that her people were Jews, for Mordecai had told her to say nothing about herself.

And Mordecai walked before the court of the women's house that he might know how Esther did and what should become of her.

At the end of twelve months the young maidens went before the king, each in her turn. And when Esther went

ESTHER AND THE KING.

in, not only the king but all those who saw her were greatly pleased with her appearance.

And the king loved Esther more than any of the other maidens, and he set the royal crown upon her head, and made her queen in the place of Vashti.

And the king made a great feast unto all his princes and servants, and it was called Esther's feast.

At this time Mordecai, who held some office at court, sat in the king's gate. Esther was still grateful for his kindness, and though a queen, was careful to obey his commands just as she did when he took care of her. And she told no one that she was a Jewess.

One day Mordecai overheard two of the officers who guarded the doors of the palace talking together and seemingly very angry.

He learned that they had planned to kill the king, and he told Esther of it; and she spoke of it to the king and made mention of Mordecai's name.

And when it was found out that what Mordecai told was true the two traitors, Bigthan and Teresh, were both put to death for their crime.

After these things, Haman, who was a servant at the palace, was made a chief minister by the king, and all the servants of the king were commanded to bow down before him. But Mordecai bowed not, nor did him reverence, for he felt that only God should be worshipped in that way. The other servants asked him every day why he did not obey the king's command. And when he gave them no answer they spoke to Haman about it, and told him that Mordecai was a Jew.

When Haman saw that Mordecai did not bow down to him he was very angry, for he was a vain man. He thought it would be beneath him to crush one man only out of spite, but if he could destroy all the Jews that were in Persia, all Mordecai's people, it would add greatly to his glory.

Esther had been queen for five years, and Haman did not know that she was a Jewess, or that Mordecai was related to her. And Haman told King Ahasuerus that there were certain people who made laws for themselves, and did not keep the king's laws. And he said the king should put a stop to it.

And he promised to pay a large sum of money into the treasury if the king would command that these people be destroyed. As a token that his request was granted Ahasuerus took the ring with the royal seal upon it from his own hand and gave it to the cruel Haman, and he told him to do with the people as he pleased, and to keep for himself all the wealth that he might take from them.

ESTHER CROWNED QUEEN.

Then the scribes were ordered to write letters to every province in the kingdom; and these letters were signed with the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring. And the letters read that on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month all the Jews, young and old, men, women, and children, should be put to death, and their goods taken from them.

Men were sent post-haste unto all the towns and villages, and a copy of the writing was left that all the people might

read it or have it read to them and be ready on that day. And the king and Haman sat down to drink, but the people in Shushan trembled with fear, and knew not what to do.

When Mordecai saw what had been done, he rent his clothes, and put on sackcloth and ashes, and went out through the city weeping bitterly. And as he could not enter the king's gate, for it was the law that no one should show any signs of grief before the king, Mordecai walked as near the gate as he could, that, being seen by those in the palace Esther might hear of him.

And everywhere the king's decree, or law, was made known there was great mourning among the Jews. They fasted, wept, and wailed; and many put on sackcloth and ashes.

When Esther was told that Mordecai was in grief she sent clothes to him, and begged him to take off the sackcloth. But he would not be comforted. Then she sent Hatach, one of her men servants, out to ask him what was the matter, and why he acted so strangely.

And Mordecai told Hatach how he had brought on himself the ill-will of Haman, who had offered the king a large sum of money if he would decree that all the Jews should be destroyed. And he gave Hatach a copy of the decree and told him to show it to Esther, and to bid her go in unto the king, and beg him to save her people.

And Hatach told Esther all that Mordecai had said. And she told the officer to go to Mordecai again and say to him that all the king's servants, and all the people of Persia, knew that whoever went before the king without being called would be put to death, unless the king held out his golden sceptre as a sign of royal favor. The king had not sent for her in thirty days, and if she dared to enter his presence she would surely lose her life.

Mordecai was told what Esther said, and he sent back word to Esther that she need not think to escape the fate of the Jews because she was the king's wife. If she held her peace God would deliver his people by some other means; but it might be that she had been placed where she was on purpose to save them.

Then Esther told Mordecai to gather together all the Jews

that were in Shushan, and let them keep a fast for three days and nights. I and my maidens will also fast; and afterwards I will go in unto the king, even though it be against the law. And if I perish, I perish.

ESTHER AT SHUSHAN.

On the third day Esther put on her royal robes, and stood where the king, who sat on his throne, could see her. And when the king saw her, she obtained favor in his sight. So she came near and touched the top of the sceptre.

And the king said to her, What is thy desire, Queen Esther, and what is thy request? It shall be given thee, even to the half of my kingdom.

Then Esther said to the king, Let the king and Haman come this day to the banquet that I have prepared for him. Then the king spoke to his servants, saying, Tell Haman to make haste that he may do as Esther has said. So the king and Haman came to the banquet that the queen had made ready.

While they were seated at the table the king said to Esther, What is thy desire, and what is thy request? It shall be given thee, even to the half of my kingdom.

Esther said, Let the king and Haman come to the banquet that I shall prepare for them to-morrow, and then I will make my request known.

Haman went forth that day with a glad heart, for it was a great honor to be invited to sit at the same table with the king. But when he passed Mordecai at the king's gate, and saw that he did not pay him the least respect, he was very angry, yet he said nothing.

When he came home he sent for his friends and for his wife. And he boasted to them of his riches and greatness, and told how the king had advanced him above all the princes and above all his other servants. He said moreover, Yea, and Esther the queen did let no man come in with the king to the banquet she had prepared but myself. And to-morrow am I invited unto her also with the king. Yet all this availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate.

Then said Teresh, his wife, and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king, that Mordecai may be hanged thereon. Then after that go thou in and enjoy the queen's banquet. And the thing pleased Haman, and he caused a gallows to be made.

On that night the king could not sleep. And he told his servants to bring him the book in which was written down an account of the chief things that took place in the kingdom. And the book was brought, and read before him; and it was

written there that some time ago Mordecai had saved the king's life by telling of two of the king's officers who had planned to kill him.

And the king said to his servants, What honor and dignity hath been done to Mordecai for this? They answered, Nothing has been done for him. While the king was speaking some one came into the court of the king's palace. And the

HAMAN LEADING MORDECAI THROUGH THE CITY.

king said, Who is in the court? Now Haman had come early that he might ask the king to hang Mordecai on the gallows which was all ready for him. And the king's servants answered, It is Haman standing in the court. The king said, Let him come in.

So Haman came in, and the king said to him, What shall be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor?

Haman said to himself, The king means me, of course. And he answered the king, Let the royal apparel that the king wears, and the horse he rides, and the crown-royal that is set on his head, be brought to the man whom the king wishes to honor. And let him wear the king's apparel and the royal crown, and let him ride on the king's horse. And let one of the most noble princes lead the horse through the streets of the city, crying out, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor.

Then king Ahasuerus said to Haman, Make haste, and take the royal apparel, and the horse, and the crown, and do to Mordecai, the Jew, as thou hast said; let nothing fail of all that thou hast spoken.

Haman dared not disobey the king, so he took the king's robes, and his horse, and his crown, and carried them to Mordecai, and brought him on horseback through the streets of the city, and proclaimed before him, Thus shall it be done to the man whom the king delighteth to honor.

And after these honors had been paid him, Mordecai went back to his place at the king's gate; but Haman went to his house in great grief and with his head covered. And he told his wife and his friends all that had happened to him.

While they were yet talking the king's messenger came to bring Haman to the banquet that Esther had made ready. So the king and Haman came to the banquet. And the king said again to Esther, What is thy desire, and what is thy request? It shall be performed, even to the half of my kingdom.

Then Esther answered, and said, If thou art pleased with me, O king, spare my life, and the lives of all the Jews. For we have been sold to be destroyed, to be slain, and to perish. Had we been sold for slaves only, I would not have spoken.

Then King Ahasuerus said to Esther the queen, Who is he that has dared to do this thing? And Esther said, Our enemy is the wicked Haman.

Then was the king very angry, and he rose from the banquet and went out into the palace-garden. And when he came back to the banqueting-room he found Haman had prostrated himself before the queen to beg for his life. One

of the king's officers said to the king, Behold the gallows fifty cubits high which Haman made ready for Mordecai, who saved the king's life, standeth in the house of Haman. The king said, Hang him thereon. So they hanged Haman on the gallows that he had prepared for Mordecai; and the king's anger was pacified.

On the same day King Ahasuerus gave to Esther the house of Haman. And Mordecai was brought before the king, for Esther had told him that Mordecai was her cousin. And the king took off his ring which he had taken from Haman, and gave it to Mordecai. And Esther made Mordecai ruler over the house where Haman had lived.

Still Esther was troubled, for the time was drawing near when all the Jews would be put to death according to the decree sent out by Haman and signed with the king's name and sealed with the king's ring.

So Esther made bold to enter the king's presence again without being called. And she fell at his feet, and begged him with tears to grant her request. Again the king held out the golden sceptre toward Queen Esther, and she arose and stood before him. And she said, If thou art pleased with me, have letters written that will change the decree sent out by Haman. For it would break my heart to see all my people and the whole Jewish nation destroyed.

Then the King Ahasuerus said to Esther the queen, and to Mordecai the Jew, Behold, I have given Esther the house of Haman, whom they have hanged on the gallows because he intended to destroy the Jews. Write ye also to the Jews as it pleases you in the king's name, and seal it with the king's ring. For anything written with the king's name, and sealed with the king's ring, became a fixed law that no man could change.

Then Mordecai called the king's scribes together, and commanded them to write another decree, saying that on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month the king grants permission to the Jews to slay and destroy all those who would do them harm. And copies of this decree were sent out to all parts of the kingdom, the messengers riding on horses, camels, mules, and young dromedaries, being urged to great haste by the king himself.

Mordecai went from the palace dressed in purple and fine linen, and with a crown on his head, and the people of Shushan were greatly pleased that the king had made so good a man his chief minister. The Jews were hopeful and happy, and everywhere received the king's decree with tokens of gladness.

And on the thirteenth day of the twelfth month the Jews armed themselves, and gathered together in every city to defend themselves; and they won a victory over all those who came out to harm them.

On the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the month they rested from fighting, for God had saved Esther and her people from the hands of those who meant to destroy them.

And Mordecai sent letters to all the Jews, telling them to keep the fourteenth and fifteenth days of the twelfth month as a time of gladness and feasting, and of praise and thanksgiving to God. And this feast—which was called The Feast of Purim—is kept by the Jews to this day.

CHAPTER XXX.

REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

When Artaxerxes was king over Persia, Nehemiah, who was a Jew was his cup-bearer. The business of a cup-bearer was to carry the wine-cup to the king when he wanted to drink.

While Nehemiah was in the king's palace, some Jews came there, and Nehemiah asked them concerning the Jews that had returned there from Persia and concerning Jerusalem. He was told that they were in great affliction and reproach, that the wall of the city was broken down and the gates burned with fire.

Nehemiah, on hearing this, sat down and wept and mourned, and fasted and prayed that God would grant him mercy in the sight of King Artaxerxes, and that he might be willing to let him go to Jerusalem to build up the walls of the city.

One day when Nehemiah handed the king the wine-cup he looked sad, and the king asked him, Why is thy face sad, seeing thou art not sick? There must be some trouble on your heart.

Nehemiah answered, Let the king live forever. Why should not my countenance be sad when Jerusalem, the city where my fathers are buried, lies waste, and its gates burned with fire?

The king said, For what dost thou make request? Nehemiah lifted his heart in prayer to God before he spoke, and then said to the king, If it please thee, I pray thee send me to Jerusalem that I may build up the walls.

And the king said (the queen also sitting by him), For how long shall thy journey be? And when wilt thou come back?

And when Nehemiah made known his plans to the king, he allowed him to go. Nehemiah also said, If it please the king let letters be given me to the governors beyond the river Euphrates, that they may help me on my journey, and a letter also unto Asaph, the keeper of the king's forest, that he may give timber to make beams for the walls and gates of the city.

And the king granted Nehemiah's request because the Lord inclined him to do so.

When Nehemiah started on his journey the king sent captains of the army and horsemen to protect him. Nehemiah gave the letters to the governors which the king had written to them, and then went on to Jerusalem.

One night Nehemiah rose up secretly, lest his enemies should know it, and went out to examine the walls of the city and see if they were in the condition he was told they were.

It was all true; the walls were in ruins as he had been told. Then Nehemiah said to the people, Ye see the distress that we are in. Jerusalem lieth waste, and the gates are burned with fire. Let us build up the wall, that we be no more a reproach.

Nehemiah told the Jews how God had disposed the heart of the king towards him, and they were strengthened for the work and said, Let us rise and build. And they began to build the wall.

When Sanballat heard that the wall was about to be built, he despised the Jews and laughed them to scorn, saying, What do these feeble Jews? Will they fortify themselves? Will they sacrifice? Will they revive the stones out of the heaps of the rubbish which are burned?

Tobiah the Ammonite, who stood by Sanballat, said, What they build if a fox go up he shall even break down their stone wall. But the Jews continued their work till the wall had risen to half its height all round the city.

Then Sanballat and Tobiah and many others formed a conspiracy and planned to fight against the Jews, and prevent the building of the wall. They meant to surprise the Jews when at work upon the wall and to slay them.

But the Jews heard of this, and Nehemiah placed men behind the wall, armed with swords and spears and bows. And he told the nobles, the rulers, and the rest of the people not to be afraid of their foes, but to remember that the Lord was strong and would fight for them and their families.

When the enemies of the Jews heard that their plans were known to the latter, and that they were armed and ready to meet them, they did not force the attack.

From that time half of Nehemiah's men built the wall, and the other half stood armed with spears, shields, bows, and arrows. The builders had swords at their sides, and even those that bore burdens used one hand in the work and with the other held a weapon. A trumpeter also stood near Nehemiah to give the alarm in case the enemy appeared when the people were all assembled in one place.

They worked hard from morning till evening, none of them taking off their clothes, except to wash them.

In spite of all the difficulties from enemies without and troubles among themselves, the Jews finished the building of the Jerusalem wall.

The troubles among themselves were caused by the oppression of the usurers. The people who were poor complained of this to Nehemiah and said that they had not only to buy bread but to pay the king's tribute money also. They were compelled, on account of all this, to borrow money and make their sons and daughters servants.

Nehemiah rebuked the usurers who oppressed the people, and made them restore their vineyards and olive-yards and houses.

When the wall was finished it was dedicated. The priests and Levites and the people went up on top of the wall in two companies; one company went one day and the other went the next, the priests sounding the trumpets and the Levites

REBUILDING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

playing on instruments and singing praises to God until they met. Then they all went to the temple, where they offered up sacrifices and burnt-offerings with great joy.

Nehemiah was determined to have order in the city, and he set rulers over it. He commanded the gates to be set up and gave them in charge to the parties who were to keep them closed at night.

Others were to be watchmen by turns to give notice of the approach of enemies. This was necessary because the city was large and had not many people living in it, and enemies might scale the walls and conquer the city.

The reason there was not a large population was that the Jews wanted to live in cities where there was much business, and where they could make money.

Because there were so few inhabitants Nehemiah took the list of the Jews that came up with Zerubbabel, and he numbered them all and sent word to the different families, begging that one in every ten would come to Jerusalem and live there. And many flocked to the city at his request.

On the first day of the seventh month the people assembled to worship the Lord. Ezra brought out of the temple the book in which the laws of Moses were written. And he stood on a pulpit of wood and opened the book, and read out of it to the old and to the young, from morning until evening, and the priests and the Levites gave the meaning of it so that the people understood it.

When they heard the laws they remembered their disobedience and sins and mourned and wept.

But the Levites said that day was to be one for rejoicing instead of weeping, and told them to go to their houses and eat the fat, and drink the sweet, and make presents to the poor.

So the people did as the Levites told them. On the second day the people assembled again, and Ezra continued to teach them more out of the law. He showed them from it that they should keep the feast of tabernacles. They should go up on the mountains and bring olive branches, pine branches, myrtle branches, and palm branches, and make tents of them.

So the people cut down the branches and made the tents on the flat roofs of their houses, in their yards, in the courts of the temple, and in the streets of Jerusalem, and they lived in these tents instead of in their houses during the seven days of the feast.

And there was universal joy, for no such feast had been kept since the days of Joshua, who led the children of Israel into the promised land. The people, soon after they had

celebrated the Feast of Tabernacles, observed a solemn fast, and were very repentant before God.

They put on sackcloth, and put earth upon them, as signs of grief. The Israelites stood apart from the strangers and confessed their sins, and promised they would obey the laws God had given them.

Nehemiah returned to Persia as he had promised King

RETURNING TO JERUSALEM.

Artaxerxes, but he did not remain there, for the king allowed him to return to Jerusalem and live there.

When he returned to Jerusalem he was grieved again, for he found that the people had forgotten the promises they had made to obey the laws God had given them. They had again married heathen women, and had failed to give the priests the portions which they were entitled to, so that

the Levites had to toil in the fields and raise food for themselves.

Nehemiah asked them why they had forsaken the house of God. He told the priests to return to their ministrations in the temple and the people to bring offerings.

He saw the people working on the Sabbath day, carrying in grain from the field, and bringing fruits, wine, and oil, and all manner of burdens to Jerusalem, and selling them in the streets on that day.

And Nehemiah rebuked the rulers and said, What evil thing is this that ye do, and profane the Sabbath day? Did not God punish our fathers for doing such things? And Nehemiah commanded that on the day before the Sabbath, when it began to be dark, the gates of the city should be shut, and not opened again until after the Sabbath.

And he set some of his servants at the gate, so that no burdens might be brought into the city on the Sabbath.

The gates being shut, the men who came to sell their goods, lodged outside the walls of Jerusalem once or twice.

Nehemiah reproved them for this, and told them if they did so again he would punish them. So they ceased coming on the Sabbath.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE APOCRYPHA—THE MACCABEES OR ASMONEANS.

"The author whose writings constitute the chief source whence the history of part of the four hundred years between the Old and New Testaments is derived is the Jewish historian Josephus; materials are also occasionally furnished by the Apocrypha and by Greek and Roman writers of profane history. As the gift of prophecy was now withdrawn, the writings which originated during this period among the people of the covenant cannot be regarded as the word of God. They are accordingly called the *Apocrypha*—that is, *concealed* writings—because they cannot, like the writings of the proph-

ets, be placed on the candlestick of the Church, and serve as an infallible *divine* light unto our path. They were, however, written by devout and enlightened men of the old covenant, and therefore they may be read with advantage; as sources of history and as witnesses of the religious views of their age they are worthy of great esteem. The following belong to the collection: 1. The Book of Judith; the history of a devout Jewish widow, who, by her courage, delivered Bethulia, when it was besieged by Holofernes, who is styled the chief captain of Nabuchodonosor. 2. The Wisdom of Solomon; an imitation of Solomon's Proverbs, by an author whose name is unknown. 3. The Book of Tobit; the history of a devout Jew, a captive of the Assyrians. 4. The Wisdom of Jesus the son of Sirach, or Ecclesiasticus; it contains many wise and excellent sayings resembling Solomon's Proverbs. 5. The Book of Baruch; it contains exhortations addressed to the people in reference to the Babylonian captivity; Baruch appears as a contemporary of Jeremiah in chapters 32, 36, 43, and 45 of that prophet. 6. Two Books of the Maccabees; the contents are of an historical character. 7. The rest of the chapters of the book of Esther; a supplement to the canonical book. 8. The history of Susanna, the history of the destruction of Bel and the Dragon in Babylon, the Song of the three holy children in the furnace; these portions are all supplementary to the history of Daniel. 9. The Prayer of Manasses. Josephus, the historian, was the son of a Jewish priest, and during the war with the Romans commanded a portion of the Jewish forces. He wrote a history of that war, as well as a history of the Jews, extending to the reign of Nero; the latter work bears the title of 'Jewish Antiquities.'

"Antiochus the Great of Syria took possession of Palestine by force in the year B.C. 203; after the possession of the country had, during several decades of years, been contested by the Ptolemies and the Selucidæ respectively, the latter finally prevailed. Antiochus also granted the Jews many privileges and amply secured their religious liberty. His son and successor, however, Seleucus Philopator, caused the temple of Jerusalem to be plundered for the purpose of obtaining

money, and his successor, Antiochus Epiphanes, was guilty of unexampled cruelties in attempting to compel the Jews to adopt the customs and the religion of the Greeks. He conquered Jerusalem in the year 169 B.C. In consequence of the obstinate resistance of the Jews, the Syrians committed ravages of the most terrible character. The city and the temple

CRUELTIES OF ANTIOCHUS EPIPHANES.

were plundered, the walls of the city were cast down, the temple was profaned and dedicated to Jupiter Olympius, the sacred writings were torn and burnt, and every imaginable mode of torture was applied for the purpose of compelling the Jews to renounce the religion and the customs of their fathers—these attempts were, however, in most cases made in vain.

"It came to pass, also, that seven brethren with their moth-

er were taken and compelled by the king against the law to taste swine's flesh, and were tormented with scourges and whips. But one of them that spake first said thus, What wouldst thou ask or learn of us? We are ready to die rather than to transgress the laws of our fathers. Then the king, being in a rage, commanded pans and caldrons to be made

MOTHER AND SEVEN SONS.

hot; which forthwith being heated he commanded to cut out the tongue of him that spake first, and to cut off the utmost parts of his body, the rest of his brethren and mother looking on. Now when he was thus maimed in all his members, he commanded him, being yet alive, to be brought to the fire. And they exhorted one another with the mother to die manfully, saying thus, The Lord God looketh upon us and in truth hath comfort in us So they were all destroyed, the

death of the youngest being more severe and cruel than that of any of his brothers. Last of all, after the sons, the mother died.

"In the meanwhile the king's officers, such as compelled the people to revolt, came into the city of Modin to make them sacrifice. And when many of Israel came unto Mattathias, the priest and his sons came also together. Then answered the king's officers, and said to the priest, Thou art a ruler, and an honorable and great man in this city, and strengthened with sons and brethren; now therefore come thou first and fulfil the king's commandment, as all the heathen have done and the men of Juda and such as remain at Jerusalem; so shalt thou and thy house be in the number of the king's friends, and thou and thy friends shall be honored with silver and gold, and many rewards. Then Mattathias answered and spake with a loud voice:

"Though all the nations that are under the king's dominion obey him, and fall away every one from the religion of their fathers, and give consent to his commandments, yet will I and my sons and my brethren walk in the covenant of our fathers. God forbid that we should forsake the law and the ordinances. We will not hearken to the king's words, to go from our religion, either on the right hand or the left. Now when he had spoken these words, there came one of the Jews in the sight of all to sacrifice on the altar which was at Modin, according to the king's commandment. Which thing when the priest of God saw, he was inflamed with zeal, and he trembled and was angry, and ran and slew him upon the altar. Also the king's commissioner who compelled men to sacrifice, he killed at that time, and the altar he pulled down.

"So he and his sons fled into the mountains, and left all that ever they had in the city.

"A number of bold men who entertained the sentiments of the faithful priest gathered around him; while these declined a pitched battle they made incursions to all parts of the country, and thus inflicted serious injuries on the Syrian garrison. After the death of the father, B.C. 166, the oldest son, Judas Maccabeus, who was bold and ardent like a young lion, succeeded after a rapid and victorious career in expelling the Syrians,

and restoring divine worship in the temple. The Feast of the Dedication of the Temple was instituted for the purpose of commemorating the event. When he was again assailed, he applied to the Romans, whose alliance he solicited, but in place of substantial aid he received promises alone from them. After that act the blessing of God seemed to depart from him; he was totally defeated by the Syrians, and lost

FLYING TO THE MOUNTAINS.

his life, B.C. 161. He was succeeded by his brother Jonathan, who was assassinated, B.C. 143. The third brother, Simon, favored by the disorders of the time, at length succeeded in taking the fortress of Zion in Jerusalem, B.C. 141, which had been hitherto occupied by the Syrians, and in securing for his people an independence which was no longer assailed, and which even the Syrians recognized. The grateful people now

invested, B.C. 140, his family with the hereditary dignity of both a prince and a high priest, 'until there should arise a faithful prophet.' Simon was slain by Syrian assassins in the year B.C. 135. His son and successor, John Hyrcanus, conquered Samaria and Galilee, and destroyed the temple on

VICTORY OF JUDAS MACCABEUS.

Mount Gerizim. He next subdued the Edomites or Idumeans, and compelled them to unite with the Jewish people by receiving the rite of circumcision. His son, Aristobulus, assumed the title of king in B.C. 106. After this period, the history of the Maccabees presents nothing else but a succession of disgraceful cabals and sanguinary family quarrels."

We have now finished our history of the Jewish people as it is related in the Books of the Old Testament. Before we begin a description of their condition and their treatment of the Messiah as it is found in the New Testament, we will look at their religious condition, during the period between the Old and the New Testaments.

We have read how severely God chastised them at different times on account of their idolatry. Those chastisements checked their tendency of falling into that grievous sin, and made them more careful in listening to the commands of God. They led them also to give more attention to the study of Scripture. After the times of Nehemiah the Jews were subject to the Persians for nearly one hundred years, but Alexander having defeated the Persian army, conquered Syria, and marched into Judea, intending to deal severely with the Jews. But it is said that as he came near Jerusalem a procession of people came out to meet him, led by the high priest Jaddua, and a large number of priests, clad in their temple or ministering robes. When Alexander saw them, God moved on his heart, and led him to treat them mercifully, allowing them to keep their own laws and mode of worship.

At the death of Alexander the Jews became subject to the kings of Egypt, and remained under their rule for a period of more than one hundred years.

They were next under the sway of Syria. One of the Syrian kings, Antiochus, was allowed to persecute them very much. He plundered the city of Jerusalem and enslaved many of the inhabitants. He profaned the temple by dedicating it to Jupiter and erecting a statue of that god on the Altar of Burnt Offering.

The people were forbidden to obey the law of God. All copies of the sacred writings that could be found were burned, and the people were compelled, under pain of death, to sacrifice to idols. They were freed from the Syrian yoke by Judas, who took possession of Jerusalem and rid the temple of the symbols of idolatry, reconsecrating the sacred edifice to the service of God.

The country became more prosperous after this, and its boundaries were much enlarged. Very soon, however, it was again conquered by the Romans, who governed it during the time our Saviour was upon earth.

The days of shadow and type, of sacrifice of animals, of truth taught by persons in their official relations as prophet, priest, and king — these days were now about to pass away forever, and the day of the greater Prophet than that of Moses, of a greater sacrifice, and the last, than that of all previous sacrifices combined, was now about to dawn upon a sinful world and a partially waiting Church. The discipline of the chosen people by captivity and restoration had been in a sense effected, and the fulness of time was fast drawing near. Four thousand years had now passed away, and the multitudinous promises were about to be fulfilled. The hour which was approaching was to be the greatest and grandest in the history of time. Angels must have felt so as they witnessed the astounding event of the Eternal Son of God laying aside his riches and his glory to become a man, that he might through his deep humiliation, poverty, and death make his people eternally rich.

"Sacrifice and offering thou wouldst not, but a body hast thou prepared me," was the utterance of the Holy One as he left the courts of highest glory to descend into our world of sin and death and woe. In him all types were to find their Antitype; in him all shadows of the ancient law were to give

place as their Substance. The lambs that had been offered on Jewish altars were now no longer to be needed because "the Lamb of God" was coming who should take away the sin of the world. The blood that had been shed and poured out at Jewish altars and sprinkled on the mercy-seat of the ark in the holiest of all and which sanctified merely to the purifying of the flesh, was now no longer to be needed, for the Great Substitute was coming, whose blood, shed upon the accursed cross, was to purge the conscience and cleanse the soul of the believer from all sin. "Every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes the same sacrifices which could never take away sin, but this man [Christ], after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God." (Hebrews x. 11, 12.)

His object in coming was to do that which never could have been accomplished save by his incarnation, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, and intercession—namely, the salvation from death, hell, sin, and all its consequences of the one who would trust in his person and believe in his work of atonement. It was his purpose not to unite people to him in his incarnation, for there he was alone, but by his sacrificial death and burial, through the mysterious operations of his Spirit, unite his people to himself in resurrection, life, and blessing, and eternal glory.

No wonder, then, that the coming of the Messiah, the Hope of Israel, and the Saviour of the world, his life, death, and resurrection, were, and ever shall remain, the central objects of interest and admiration to all the blood-washed in heaven, to all the holy angels in that land of unspeakable splendor, and to all the blood-redeemed on earth.

God had not forgotten to be gracious. Man may be in a hurry, but the Lord who sees the end from the beginning waits for the fulness of time before his purposes as old as eternity are executed. During all the years and ages about which we have been writing he was preparing the world for the advent of his Eternal Son, the Saviour of mankind. Saints of old had lived with holy faith on the prophecies, and with expectant and longing eye looked for the great Redemption. The wise men of other nations were ready to follow

the Star of Bethlehem. Throughout the whole Eastern world high expectations took possession of the people that a Jewish child should become the ruler of the world. And this period is called in the fourth chapter of Galatians the "fulness of time." No time previous to this could have been more opportune or appropriate. God wanted men to understand the great evil that sin had wrought and how he hated sin, and how, if sin were ever to be atoned for and put away forever, somebody greater than man must be the victim to be slain. And that victim was the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ.

If God had kept the world waiting longer, people in despair might have forgotten or despised the promise.

If God had sent his Son into the world sooner, men would have lost the great evidence given in the books of the Old Testament which allude so plainly to him through all the past years. We needed the continued history of God's dealings with the Jewish nation in order to understand the greatness and goodness of Christ and the tremendous importance of his work on the cross for us, when he laid down his life as a sacrifice for our sins.

If the Saviour had visited the world as in the days of his flesh, very early in the infancy of the race, before civilization had made any progress, men might have said that no confidence could be placed in so ancient and dim a story, that we could not trust a tale so contrary to all present experience, resting only upon the uncertain traditions and sayings of an ignorant and unlettered past.

The condition of the world at that time presents all civilized nations as united under one empire; a universal peace prevailed; and one language—Greek—was spoken by learned persons everywhere, by Jews and Romans as well as by the Greeks. Fables and superstitions made even the heathen sick. The desire of all nations was for Light and Help; for some one to come who should explain the mystery of their being, who should tell them of a cure for sin, of peace for the troubled conscience, of that better time when "the golden age" as they called it would return, and fear and pain and sorrow be put away forever. The law, the sacrifices, and the prophets of the Jew, the helplessness and darkness of the hea-

then, alike bade the world lift up its head, for its Redemption must be drawing nigh.

That was the fulness of time. And then God sent forth his Son.

For nothing but a Redeemer, one who could pay an immense debt and had power also to unbar the prison door of captives long imprisoned by a great enemy, could so change the face of the moral world as to bring light and happiness and blessedness and gladness to the sons and daughters of men. Israel had suffered the consequences of idolatry, the Gentile or heathen world had been for ages steeped in ignorance, superstition, and appalling crime. Rome, with iron hand, usurped authority over sea and land. The anguish of human hearts that had been under the influence of unseen but not unfelt power rose up to God for deliverance, and he who in so many parts of the Bible has said, "Ye shall not seek my face in vain," was now ready to send to this lost orb, this sinful world, his "unspeakable gift," his well-beloved Son, the Lord Jesus Christ.

The following history gives an account of the coming from heaven to earth of that Holy One, of his Incarnation, his life of goodness and mercy mingled with miracle-working power, in healing diseases, raising the dead, and at last going to the accursed cross to atone for sins which he himself had not committed. In this history it will be seen also how the Jew, to whom this Messiah was sent in the first instance, utterly rejected and disowned him, and how literally the words of their own prophet Isaiah were fulfilled:

"He shall grow up before him as a tender plant, and as a root out of dry ground: he hath no form nor comeliness; and when we shall see him, there is no beauty that we should desire him.

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not.

"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

"But he was was wounded for our transgressions, he was

bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

"All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

"He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth.

"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgression of my people was he stricken.

"And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth.

"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand.

"He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities.

"Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

A few years later, and the chosen nation miraculously preserved until his coming was scattered and destroyed. The Holy City was trodden under foot, the Temple cast down to the ground. The Jewish people and the Jewish religion had fulfilled their part. A new dispensation had begun. The Church and the religion of Jesus had brought light and life to the world.

NEW TESTAMENT

THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

NEW TESTAMENT.

CHAPTER XXXII.

JOHN THE BAPTIST—ZACHARIAS—ELIZABETH—THE ANGEL—MARY—ROMAN EMPEROR—BETHLEHEM—SHEPHERDS—SONG OF THE ANGELS—SIMEON—ANNA—HEROD.

MANY prophecies concerning the coming of our Saviour had been made, but none were made during the period of four hundred years before his advent.

The people of the world were now expecting him, and God sent a man before him named John the Baptist to tell the people to repent of their sins and be ready to receive the Messiah.

At the birth of John, his father, Zacharias served in the temple. His wife's name was Elizabeth. They were both good people, and obeyed the commandments of God. They had no children. This was a great trial to them.

The priests served in the temple by turns, and were chosen by lot. One day, as Zacharias was burning incense on the

golden altar he saw an angel of the Lord standing on the right side of the altar of incense.

When Zacharias saw him he was afraid; but the angel told him not to fear, for God would give him a son whose name would be John. He would be great in the sight of the Lord, and would drink neither wine nor strong drink, and he would be filled with the Holy Spirit from his birth.

ANGEL ANNOUNCING TO ZACHARIAS THE BIRTH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

John was to go before the Saviour and prepare his way.

Zacharias asked the angel how he would know that all these things, so much desired by him, would take place.

The angel told him that God sent him from heaven with the news. He gave him a sign, also, which was that he would not be able to speak until they occurred. This was a punishment, as well as a sign, because he did not believe the news God sent him by the angel.

The appearance of this angel was a remarkable sign, and he should not have asked for another.

The coming out of the priest from the sanctuary was a very solemn part of the temple service, and the people were waiting for this, and wondered that he remained inside so long.

Perhaps he was overcome by the effects of the vision, and when he came out he was dumb, as the angel had said he would be, and could make them understand his meaning only by signs. In this way he told them he had seen a vision. John was born according to promise, and eight days after his birth, when Elizabeth's neighbors and cousins came to see her and rejoice with her, they called him Zacharias, the name his father had. But his mother objected to this and called him John. Then they made signs to his father, and asked him how he would have him called. The father asked for a writing-table, and wrote, not being able to speak, His name is John.

JOHN THE BAPTIST.

God had chosen this name for the child, and the angel gave it to Zacharias in the temple.

As soon as Zacharias had written the name on the tablet God unloosed his tongue again, and he praised the Lord.

After the angel Gabriel had appeared to Zacharias in the temple God sent him to another woman, who was a cousin to Elizabeth, John's mother. She lived in Nazareth, a town very little thought of.

The woman's name was Mary. The angel said to her, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee. When Mary saw the angel she was troubled and wondered what he meant by addressing her in that way.

THE VISITATION.

But the angel told her not to fear, because she had favor with God and should have a Son who would be called Jesus, and who would be the Saviour of the world.

Mary replied, I am thy handmaid; let it be according to thy word

Then the angel left her. Mary at once went to visit her cousin Elizabeth, who lived in a city of Judea, and remained there for about three months, and then returned home.

The Roman Emperor ruled over Judea at this time, because the Jews had been conquered by the Romans.

He issued a decree that all in his kingdom should be taxed, and each citizen was to go for that purpose to his own city.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, and Joseph her husband went to Bethlehem, the city of David, because they were descended from King David.

While in Bethlehem Jesus was born, as the prophet Micah had foretold. The inn or hotel where travellers lodged was so full of guests when Joseph and Mary reached there that there was no room for them, so they had to make a bedroom of a stable or cattle-shed, and in such a building the Saviour of the world was born.

THE MARRIAGE OF THE VIRGIN.

His mother wrapped him in babies' clothes and laid him in a manger. About the time of Christ's birth an angel of the Lord appeared to some shepherds who were in the field, watching their flocks by night, and so bright was the light which attended the angel that the shepherds were afraid. But the angel told them not to fear, because he

brought them good news for all people, namely, that the Saviour of the world was born in the city of David.

The angel also told the shepherds how they would know the infant, that they would find him wrapped in swaddling-clothes and lying in a manger.

Besides this angel who thus spoke to them there was a multitude of angels with him, who suddenly began to praise

THE ADORATION OF THE SHEPHERDS.

God, saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good-will toward men.

As soon as the angels had ceased their song, and had left for heaven, the shepherds started for Bethlehem, to see the things of which the angel had told them and to see the Saviour.

When they reached Bethlehem they found Joseph and Mary, and the babe wrapped in swaddling-clothes lying in the manger, as the angel had said.

They told others what the angel had said, and how they

had seen the Child, which made those who heard it wonder very much.

Then the shepherds returned to their flocks, rejoicing and praising for all they had heard and seen.

When the child was eight days old his parents called his name Jesus and consecrated him to the Lord. Then they

THE SHEPHERDS ANNOUNCING THE BIRTH OF JESUS.

brought him to the temple at Jerusalem, and there offered up a sacrifice of turtle-doves or young pigeons.

There was in Jerusalem at this time a good man named Simeon, who, like many others, was expecting Jesus to come in fulfilment of prophecies which had been made.

The Holy Spirit had revealed to Simeon that he would not die till he had seen Christ the Saviour. The Spirit led Simeon up to the temple, and when the parents brought in the child Simeon took him up in his arms and said, Lord, now lettest

thou thy servant depart in peace, according to thy word, for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.

There was a woman named Anna, a widow, who was eighty-

S.MEON IN THE TEMPLE.

four years old, who spent all her time in the temple serving God night and day with fastings and prayers.

While Simeon was speaking she came into the temple and praised God. Afterward she spoke of Jesus to all those who were waiting for his coming.

THE CHILD JESUS BROUGHT TO THE TEMPLE.

Beside these there came wise men from the east inquiring where Jesus was. They said they had seen his star in the east, a star that God had sent to guide them, and that they had come to worship him.

Herod the King heard what the wise men said, and was

THE GUIDING STAR.

troubled by the thought of another king coming who might possibly take his place as king over Judea, so he called the high priests and scribes together and asked them where Christ was to be born.

They told him that the prophet had said he would be born in the city of Bethlehem. Then he asked the wise men what

time the star appeared, and when they had told him he sent them to Bethlehem to search for the young child, and told them when they had found him to tell him, that he might go and worship him also.

But Herod, instead of wanting to worship Jesus, wanted to kill him.

The wise men then went to Bethlehem, the star which they had seen going before them till it rested over the house in which the child Jesus was.

When they saw the star they rejoiced exceedingly, and entering the house they saw the young child with Mary his mother, and fell down before him and worshipped him.

They then opened their treasures and presented gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh to Jesus. In these times it was the custom in the eastern countries, whenever a man visited a king, to present him with rich presents, and Christ was really a King, though many did not think so when he was on earth.

Herod expected those wise men to return and tell him where Christ was, but God meant to preserve his Son from the wicked king, and so he warned the wise men in a dream not to return to Herod, but to go back to their own country by a different way to that by which they had come.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

HEROD—JOSEPH—THE ANGEL—FEAST OF THE PASSOVER—CHRIST AMONG THE DOCTORS—JOHN IN THE WILDERNESS—BAPTISM OF CHRIST—TEMPTATION OF CHRIST—MARRIAGE IN CANA OF GALILEE—THE FIRST MIRACLE—DRIVING THE SELLERS FROM THE TEMPLE—JESUS AND NICODEMUS—DEATH OF JOHN THE BAPTIST—THE SECOND MIRACLE—CHRIST AND PETER.

When Herod found that he was mocked by the wise men he was very wroth, and had all the young children in Bethlehem that were two years of age, and younger than that, slain; and in this cruel way he thought that the child Jesus would

surely be among the slain, and would never be king in his place.

Before any of the children were killed God sent an angel by night to warn Joseph as to what Herod was going to do. The angel told him to take the child and his mother and flee into Egypt, and stay there till he should tell him to leave.

So Joseph fled in the night to Egypt, and lived there till Herod was dead. After a while the angel appeared to Joseph

THE MASSACRE OF THE INNOCENTS.

again, and told him that he might return to his own country again, because Herod, who sought to kill Jesus, was dead. So Joseph took Mary and the young child and returned, and lived in the city of Nazareth.

The feast of the Passover was held every year at Jerusalem, and Joseph and Mary always attended it.

When Jesus was twelve years old his parents took him with them to the holy city, and on their return Jesus remained in Jerusalem behind them, though his parents did not know it.

They had travelled a day's journey before they discovered

that he was not with the company. People went to Jerusalem to the feast of the Passover, and returned home again in companies, so that Jesus might be in the crowd somewhere without his parents seeing him.

THE FLIGHT INTO EGYPT.

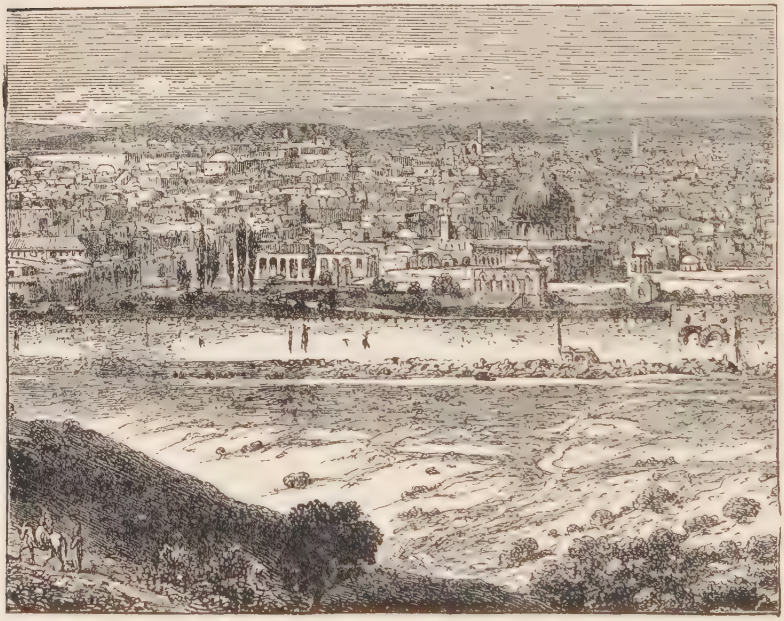
But when they found he was not with any of their relatives or friends they returned to Jerusalem seeking him.

They found him in the temple in the midst of the teachers, both hearing and asking questions, and astonishing them with his great wisdom, which we need not wonder at, because he was only a child, and they were old and learned men.

When his parents found him, his mother asked, Son, why

hast thou thus dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee with sorrow. Jesus replied to his mother, Why did you look for me? Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?

Christ knew that he came to this world to do a very important work, to teach men the will of God, to show them how to be saved, and to shed his blood for them. But his parents did



JERUSALEM.

not understand him. Yet he lived with them, and obeyed them as any good child would do.

Jesus did not enter upon his great work of teaching his disciples and the people generally till he was thirty years old, and we are not told much in the New Testament as to how he spent the years of his youth.

No doubt he went to school as other children did, and studied the Old Testament. What a good child he must have been! So gentle and kind, never angry or rude, and he must have been greatly liked by the children with whom he studied.

His father was a carpenter, and Jesus worked at the same trade.

Before Christ began his great work God arranged that John the Baptist should prepare the people by his teaching to receive him.

CHRIST IN THE TEMPLE.

John began to preach in the wilderness of Judea. The Scriptures do not tell us what kind of a boy John was; they speak of him as a man, and they tell us that he lived upon coarse food, locusts and wild honey. His garments were made of very coarse material, the hair that grows on a camel, while he wore a girdle or belt of leather around his waist.

John told the people that he was not the Saviour, but that the Saviour would come after him. He said that he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of his shoes, and that they should prepare to receive the Saviour by being baptized with water, and by being sorry for their sins and leaving them forever.

He warned them against thinking that, because they were Jews and were descended from Abraham, that they must live

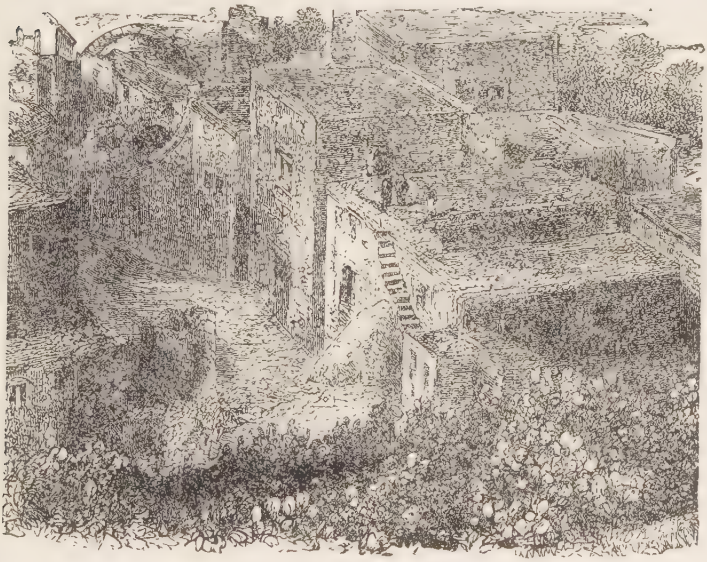
NAZARETH.

to please God by obeying his commandments. He told them of Christ, who should come after him, and he alone could wash away their sins and make them good by putting holy fire in their hearts, that the Saviour would divide the people of the world into two classes, named chaff and wheat; the chaff he would burn up with fire, while the wheat—that is, the good people—he would gather in heaven, as a farmer gathers wheat into his storehouse.

John told them that he baptized with water, but that the Saviour would baptize men with the Holy Ghost, and with

fire. The fire destroys sin in the soul, which water cannot do. John knew very well that he was not the Messiah, but was far beneath him in power, in fact only a man, while Jesus was the Son of God. Hence when Jesus came to the river Jordan, where John was baptizing multitudes, and asked to be baptized, John said he had greater need to be baptized by him, and asked Christ why he came to him.

The Saviour said that it was becoming to fulfil all righteousness, that is, to obey the commands which God gave us,



HOUSES IN NAZARETH.

and so in respect to his baptism as in all other respects Christ set the example which he wanted us to follow. John went down with Jesus into the Jordan and baptized him, and when Jesus was coming up out of the water, the heavens were opened and the Spirit came down from heaven in the form of a dove, and rested upon him. The dove was the emblem of peace and reconciliation between God and man, and by the Spirit are men reconciled to God, and friendship established between them.

As the dove descended upon Christ, there was heard, at the same moment, a voice from heaven saying, This is my Beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

From the scene of his baptism Christ went into the wilderness, where he was without food for forty days and forty nights, and where he prayed much, as well as fasted, in order to meet and overcome the devil, who came to him to tempt him, as he has come to all good men from the time he persuaded Adam and Eve to eat of the forbidden fruit.

Christ's great object in coming into the world was to save men, just what Satan does not want to be done. When the devil came to Christ, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread, and with it get rid of hunger. Jesus would rather be hungry than obey the devil and disobey God, and so he told Satan that rendering obedience to God was much more important than having food to eat.

Then Satan took Jesus up into Jerusalem and set him on a pinnacle of the Temple, which was very high, and told him that if he were the Son of God he might throw himself down, because the Bible said that God would give his angels charge concerning him, and they would bear him up in their hands lest he should dash his foot against a stone. In reply, Jesus said, The Bible also said that we were not to tempt the Lord our God by putting ourselves in danger when it was not necessary, and then expecting God to save us from being hurt.

The next place to which Satan took Christ was an exceeding high mountain, so that he could have a good view of all the kingdoms of the world and their glories of armies and commerce and wealth.

He told Jesus that he would give him all these things if he would only fall down and worship him. It seems remarkable that the devil could make such a proposal, hoping Christ to receive it, that the pure-minded Saviour of the world should engage in worshipping the enemy of God and of man. Jesus told him to leave him, that he would not listen to such a suggestion, because the Bible commanded us to worship the Lord our God, and him only to serve.

Satan failed in his attempts to get our Lord to yield to any

JOHN THE BAPTIST PREACHING.

of his suggestions, so he left him, and God sent angels to minister unto him and comfort him.

After the Temptation our Lord returned to Jordan and mingled again with the people, and when John saw him he pointed him out, first, to the multitude, and a second time to two of his own disciples as the Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world—meaning that Christ was to be crucified and to shed his blood to wash away the sins of the world.

The two disciples to whom John spoke of Christ as the Messiah followed Jesus, and went with him to the house where he lived.

One of these two, the Scriptures tell us, was Andrew, and it has been the belief of the Church that the other was St. John the Evangelist, though the gospels do not say so.

Andrew brought his brother Peter to the house where Christ lived, and the next day two others, Philip and Nathaniel, followed him. All of these went to Jesus to be taught, that they might be with him while he was on earth and learn of him, and also be the great preachers of the truth after Christ had left the world.

The village of Cana, where Nathaniel lived, was not far from Nazareth. In Cana there was a marriage. Some think that it was the marriage of some near relatives of our Lord's mother. She was at the wedding, and so was Christ and his disciples.

The supply of wine for the guests was exhausted, and the mother of Jesus came and told him of it, because she had a deeper knowledge of Christ than any one present. She knew that he was God as well as man, and that he could work a miracle whenever he chose.

Christ's mother went to the servants and told them, Whatsoever he saith unto you do it.

In the house there were six water-pots made of stone. Jesus told the servants to fill them with water. They were very large vessels and held from sixty to one hundred gallons of water. When they were filled with water Christ told the servants to draw out some of the contents and carry it to the governor of the feast. On doing so they found the water was changed into wine, and they must have been astonished.

The governor of the feast knew nothing of the miracle

Christ had wrought, but when he tasted the wine which was made he said it was better than what they had been drinking, and wondered that the good wine had not been

THE MARRIAGE IN CANA.

put on the table first, which it was customary to do, but, said he to the bridegroom, You have kept the good wine till now.

This was the first miracle which Jesus wrought, and when

the disciples saw that he possessed such power they believed that he was the Son of God.

After this Christ went down to Capernaum with his mother

DRIVING THE SELLERS FROM THE TEMPLE.

and brethren and his disciples, where he remained a few days.

The Jews' Passover was near, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, for he observed the Passover as well as other Jews.

He went into the temple, and found a number of Jews sell-

ing for gain oxen, sheep, and doves, and the changers of money sitting. All this went under the name of worship, but Christ read the hearts of the people and knew it was only pretence, so he was grieved that the house of God should be so polluted. He then made a scourge of small cords and drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overthrew the tables.

Each Jew was obliged to give the priest half a shekel every year as an offering to the Lord, which went to support the service of the temple. Those who came from other lands, or those who had not the right coin with them, went to the money-changers for half shekels.

But all of this could have been done in another place or at another time, and certainly in a different spirit, for they were filled with a desire of gain, so Christ told them to take all such things away, and not to make his Father's house an house of merchandise.

Christ to-day looks into human hearts as he did when he saw the wickedness in the hearts of those who defiled his Father's house, and is displeased whenever he sees a heart that is so impure that he cannot dwell in it.

The Jews were greatly displeased because Christ interfered with business, and thought he had not the right to do so, so they asked him for some sign that would prove that he was the Messiah which was to come.

Christ said, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up. They thought he referred to the beautiful temple at Jerusalem, which took forty-six years to build, and ridiculed the idea that he could build it up in three days were it thrown down.

Christ meant that when they killed him he would raise the temple of his body from the grave in three days which he afterwards did, but this they did not understand.

There was a man came to Jesus by night named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. He called Christ Master, and said that it was known that he was a teacher which came from God, else he could not have wrought such miracles as he did.

Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man were born again, that is, except he had all his nature changed, he could not be

come a child of God or enter heaven. This truth Nicodemus could not understand, which led Christ to ask him, Art thou a master in Israel and knowest not these things? Nicodemus being a ruler of the Jews or a member of the Sanhedrim, a body of men who were considered to be skilled in the word of God, ought to have known more concerning what men must be to be acceptable to God and to be fit for heaven, but there was much that he did not understand.

HERODIAS WITH THE HEAD OF JOHN THE BAPTIST.

Christ wanted to enlighten him, and brought to his mind the remedy which God gave the Israelites, who were bitten by the fiery serpents while in the wilderness because of their sins.

Moses made a serpent of brass and put it on a pole, and told all who were bitten to look at it. Nicodemus had read the account of all this that is given in the Bible, and Jesus told him that as the serpent was lifted up by Moses in the wilderness, so must the Son of man be lifted up, and as all the

Israelites who looked at the serpent of brass were cured of the effects of the bite of the fiery serpent, so all who looked at Christ as he died on the cross and believed upon him would be cured of the poison of sin, for God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life in heaven.

The king ruling in Galilee at this time was Herod, not the Herod who sought to kill the Saviour, but his son, another Herod, who killed John the Baptist.

John reproved Herod because of his sins, and this displeased the wicked king so much that he cast him into prison.

Herodias tried to persuade Herod to kill him, but she could not because he knew and feared the multitude, for they counted John a prophet.

While the Baptist was in prison Herod kept his birthday, and made a great feast, to which he invited the distinguished men of his kingdom. Salome, the daughter of Herodias, came in and danced before the company and pleased Herod so much that he promised with an oath to give her whatsoever she would ask.

Her wicked mother told her to ask the king to command that the head of John the Baptist be taken off, and brought to her in a dish.

She went back to Herod and said, I want you to give me here the head of John the Baptist in a dish. The king was sorry, yet he would not break the promise he had made and his oath by which he had confirmed it, and also because of the men who had heard him make the promise.

So the king gave orders that an executioner should be sent to the prison, and that John should be beheaded, and his head placed in a dish and carried to Salome. He gave the order because he was afraid of the ridicule of his courtiers and the displeasure of his wife. When Salome received the dish, with the head in it, she brought it to her mother. John's disciples, hearing of the death of their teacher, came and took the body and buried it, and then went and told Jesus of the burial of their teacher.

When Jesus heard of John's death he took ship and went into a desert place, whither the people followed him. There

he healed a great many sick people that were brought to him, because he was moved with compassion towards them.

While in the desert his disciples came to him and said, This is a desert place. Send the multitude away that they

FEEDING THE MULTITUDE.

may get something to eat. And Jesus said they need not leave where they were, and told his disciples to give them to eat.

The disciples were surprised at this command, and said, We have here but five barley loaves and two fishes, and we cannot feed such a number of people with so little.

Jesus said, Bring them to me, and make the people sit down on the grass. He then took the loaves and fishes, and looked up to heaven and blessed them and brake them, and gave the pieces to the disciples to distribute amongst the multitude, and the people ate all they desired and yet there remained fragments of food sufficient to fill twelve baskets.

In the multitude there were five thousand men beside women and children. Christ was in Jerusalem, where he was rejected by the rulers, who were jealous because he was so popular amongst the people, and left Jerusalem to go into Galilee.

The nearest way to get there was to go through Samaria. He came, on his journey, to a city called Sychar, near which was Jacob's well, where the people of the city got water. The weather was hot, and Christ was tired, having walked a long distance over a rough country of many hills and not much shade.

He had walked probably over sixty miles. People travelling in that country rested under large trees, in caves, or near wells. Christ, being wearied with his journey, sat down beside the well to rest, while his disciples were gone into the city to buy food. There came a woman from the city of Samaria carrying a pitcher, to draw water out of the well. God had so arranged it that this woman should come to the well at this hour when Christ was there, so that he should have a conversation with her.

She was not a good woman, but a great sinner, which Christ very well knew, yet the Saviour conversed with her because he wanted her to be saved. He asked her for a drink. This surprised her, because she was a Samaritan and he a Jew, and the Jews despised the Samaritans and would have no dealings with them. They would consider themselves as defiled if they used their vessels to drink out of.

Christ may have taken a drink of the water, being thirsty, but he was more interested in talking to the woman about another kind which he called living water which he would give to those that wanted it to quench the thirst of the soul—water that gives spiritual life.

The woman did not understand him, as many do not now,

and wanted to know where that living water was, because the well she drew from was deep, and hence it was difficult to draw the water up out of it.

Christ wanted to teach her that salvation or goodness was put by him in the souls that would receive it, that it would

THE WOMAN AT THE WELL.

give them great rest and comfort, and eternal life both here and in heaven. He then showed her that he knew how she had been living and of the sins that she had committed, which so surprised her that she said, Sir, I perceive that thou art a prophet, else thou couldst not have known how I have been living. Then she said to him, I know that Messias cometh

which is called Christ; when he is come he will tell us all things.

Jesus said unto her, I that speak unto thee am he. The disciples came back from the city and wondered when they found Christ talking to a Samaritan woman. The woman left her water-pot and went into the city, and said unto the people, Come see a man that told me all things that ever I did. Is not this the Christ? Many of them, when they heard what the woman said, went out and saw Jesus and invited him into their city. They wanted him to stay some time with them, and he stayed there two days.

Many of the Samaritans believed on Christ because of what the woman had told, but many more believed because of his own word, and said, We have heard him ourselves and know that this is Christ indeed, the Saviour of the world.

After our Lord had spent two days in Samaria he went into Galilee, and came again into the city of Cana, where he had before attended a marriage feast and had changed water into wine. There was a nobleman at Capernaum that held a high position in the court of King Herod. His son was very sick, and the physicians thought he would not recover. No doubt the nobleman had heard of the great miracle which he had wrought, that of turning water into wine, and he thought that a man who could work such a miracle as that could cure sickness. So he wanted Christ to go down with him to where the child was before he would die, thinking that it was necessary that Christ should be near the child before he could heal him.

Christ said, Go thy way, thy son liveth. The nobleman believed what Christ said, and went towards home. When on the way his servants met him and said, Thy son liveth. He asked them at what hour he began to amend. They said, Yesterday at the seventh hour the fever left him; and this was the very hour in which Jesus had told him, Thy son liveth. This nobleman and all who were in his house believed that Jesus was the Son of God, the Saviour of the world.

When John the Baptist was beheaded by Herod, Jesus left Judea and came into Galilee, as we have said. He did so probably to escape a similar fate at the hands of Herod.

The work which John the Baptist had begun and in the doing of which his life had been cut short by the wicked Herod, Christ carried on.

After Jesus left Judea he went into his own city Nazareth; but the Nazarenes, his own countrymen, would not receive his message, but sought to take away his life, so he left them and

JESUS AND PETER.

went to Capernaum, a city in which he spent a good deal of his time teaching, and where he wrought many of his miracles.

Capernaum was a city by the Sea of Galilee which also rejected Christ, although he had there given such great displays of his power. He had honored it by giving it the title

of his own city and spent much time there in teaching the people.

As he stood on the shore of the Sea of Galilee with a multitude of people he saw two men mending their nets, their boats being on the shore. Christ went on board Peter's boat and requested that he would thrust it out a little from the shore.

And he sat in the boat and taught the people who were on the shore. When he had finished his discourse he told Peter and Andrew to row the boat into deep water, and to let down their nets into the sea so that they might catch fish. Peter thought that there would be little chance of catching many, and said, Master, we have toiled all night and have taken nothing, nevertheless at thy word I will let down the net.

When the net was let down it became so full of fish that it was broken, and they beckoned unto their partners which were in the other ship that they should come and help them.

And they filled both boats so full that they began to sink. When Simon Peter saw the wonderful miracle which Christ had wrought he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord. For he was astonished and all that were with him at the draught of fishes which they had taken. Christ said to Peter and Andrew, Follow me and I will make you fishers of men, and they immediately left their nets and followed him.

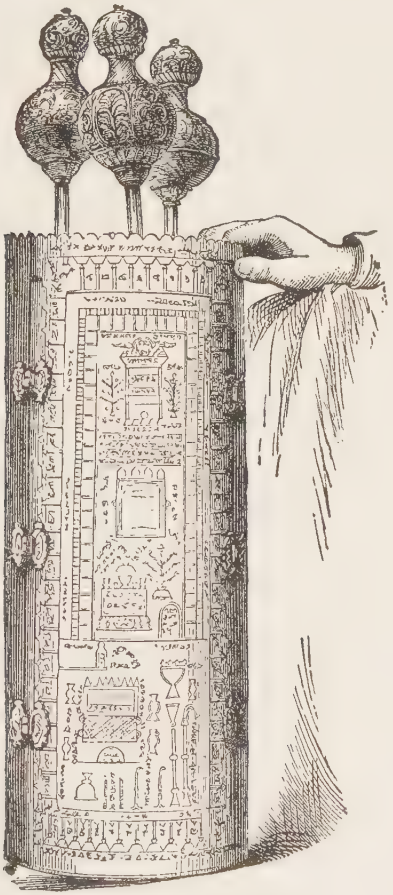
They did not hesitate, but left the business by which they made their living to be his companions, to do as he would direct them, and to share in his sufferings.

The place where the Jews offered up their sacrifices was in the city of Jerusalem, and in the temple, but in every city they had a synagogue where they met on Sabbath days to worship God, to read the Scripture, and hear it expounded, and to pray.

The Scripture did not exist then as now, in the form of a book, but was written with pen and ink on rolls of parchment made from the skin of sheep or goats dried and prepared for that purpose.

These rolls were kept in the ark which was in the Holy of Holies in the temple. When the people were all assembled

in the synagogue, having their faces turned towards Jerusalem, the ruler of the synagogue sometimes asked some one present to read the Scripture, and then address the congregation.



CYLINDER HOLDING THE PENTATEUCH.

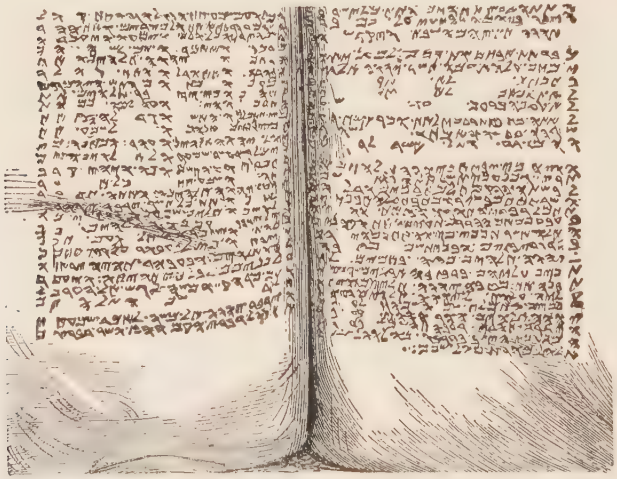
Jesus being in Nazareth, where he was reared, went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day, as was his custom.

The book of the prophet Isaiah was given to him, and he

opened the book and found the place where it was written, and read, The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor, he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord.

When he had finished reading, he closed the roll and gave it to the minister, and sat down.

And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were



TWO PAGES OF THE SAMARITAN PENTATEUCH.

fastened on him. Then Jesus said unto them that on that day these words were fulfilled in their ears, and that he was the Messiah, the Saviour of the world, concerning whom the prophet Isaiah had made the prophecy.

All the men in the synagogue were very angry when Christ said that Isaiah's prophecy was fulfilled in him, for they would not believe that he was the Messiah, and they rose up and thrust him out of the city, leading him to the brow of a hill, whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong—but by the Spirit of God he passed through the midst of them and went his way.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

HEALING SIMON'S WIFE'S MOTHER—THE LEPER—THE PARALYTIC CURED — MATTHEW — IN THE CORN-FIELDS — THE WITHERED HAND—THE LOST SHEEP—THE POOL OF BETHESDA—THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

When Jesus was at Capernaum he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and taught the people. There was a man in the synagogue possessed with an evil spirit who cried out so that all present could hear him, Let us alone. What have we to do with thee, thou Jesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy us? I know thee who thou art, the Holy One of God. Jesus rebuked the spirit, saying, Hold thy peace and come out of him. And when the devil had thrown him in the midst, he came out of him and hurt him not.

And they were all amazed and spake among themselves, saying, What a word is this! for with authority and power he commandeth the unclean spirits, and they come out. The Saviour then left the synagogue and went into Simon's house. Simon's wife's mother was ill with a fever, and they prayed that Jesus would heal her. The Lord stood over her, and rebuked the fever, and he took her by the hand and lifted her up, and her malady was healed and she arose and ministered unto Christ and his disciples.

At sunset of the same day all the people of the city who had any sick relatives brought them unto him, and he laid his hands on every one of them and healed them. He also cast out devils from many that were possessed.

The next morning he went into a desert place for prayer to strengthen him, as the holy dependent man, for the many duties which he had to perform, but the people followed him and they wanted him to stay with them.

He told them that he must preach the gospel to other cities as well as their's, for his Father had sent him for that purpose. He went therefore to many places in Galilee and taught in the synagogues, and healed multitudes who were sick and diseased. In one city a man who was full of leprosy came to

him. This was a disease which no man could cure. The leper, when he saw Jesus, fell on his face and besought him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt thou canst make me clean. Now, the law

SIMON'S WIFE'S MOTHER.

forbade all contact with the leper, but Christ put forth his hand and touched him, saying, I will: be thou clean. And immediately the leprosy departed from him.

Jesus charged him to tell no man who had healed him, but

to go and show himself to the priests at Jerusalem, and to present the sacrifice, which Moses commanded all those cured of leprosy to offer.

The man, instead of telling no one about his cure as Christ

THE PARALYTIC CURED.

had commanded him, published it everywhere he went, so that the fame of Jesus spread rapidly abroad.

The leper did this, either because he was zealous for Christ's honor or because he was glad he was cured of the terrible disease, which, but for the Saviour's power, would have ended in certain death.

The result of the healed leper's testimony was that crowds gathered around the Saviour, some to hear him speak, and others to be healed of their disease.

At Capernaum they brought in on a bed a man who was taken with a palsy. Pharisees and doctors of the law were sitting by, who were watching all that he did and who hated him because he exposed their wickedness and great hypocrisy.

On account of the great crowd those who carried the sick man could not get him to where Jesus was by the doorway, but they were not easily discouraged, and they took another way of getting him to Jesus. Eastern houses have flat roofs and flights of steps on the outside leading up to the top. Up these steps they carried the sick man, then they uncovered a portion of the roof, and through this opening they let the palsied man down into the midst of the people in the house near to where Jesus was.

When the Saviour saw their faith, he said unto the sick man, Son, thy sins are forgiven thee. This roused the anger of the Scribes and Pharisees who were present, and they said in their hearts, Who is this that speaketh blasphemies? Who can forgive sins but God alone?

Christ knew their thoughts and said to them, What reason ye in your hearts? Which is easier to say, Thy sins be forgiven thee, or to say, Rise up and walk? But that ye may know that I have power to forgive sins, I will show you that power by making this man well. Then Jesus said to the man sick of the palsy, Arise, take up thy bed, and go into thine house. And immediately he arose, took up his bed, and went to his own house glorifying God. And the people were amazed and glorified God and were filled with fear, saying, We have seen strange things to-day.

The Jews paid taxes to the Romans because they were in subjection to them, and the Romans appointed men to receive those taxes, or, as it was called, the tribute-money. These men were called publicans, a class of persons that the Jews hated very much, because they took their money and also because they were not honest and took from them more money than they should.

As Jesus walked by the Lake of Galilee he saw one of these named Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, perhaps it was at the port of Capernaum. Though Matthew belonged to this class of persons who were so much despised amongst

IN THE CORN-FIELDS.

the Jews, yet Christ invited him to become one of his follow ers, saying, Follow me. And he followed him, leaving all he had, and became one of the Lord's disciples.

On the Sabbath day Jesus walked through the corn-fields

with his disciples. The disciples were hungry and picked some of the ears of corn and rubbed them with their hands and ate them.

The Pharisees, ever ready to find fault, said that this was breaking the Sabbath, and that it was wholly inconsistent in one who said he could forgive sins to allow his disciples to do so.

Christ told them of David, who, when flying from Saul, went into the house of God, and did eat the shew bread, which was not lawful for him to eat, but only for the priests.

He told them also that the priests in the temple did more work on the Sabbath, yet were blameless, and further that he, the Son of man, was Lord of the Sabbath day, and that the Sabbath was ordained for the good of man, and not man for the Sabbath.

A week after this Jesus went into the synagogue and saw there a man whose hand was withered so that he could not use it. The Scribes and Pharisees were present and kept their eyes on Jesus, to see whether he would heal the man. And they asked him, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? that they might accuse him.

Christ asked which of them having a sheep fall into a pit would not lay hold of it on the Sabbath day and lift it out.

Then Jesus said to the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it forth, and it was immediately as well as the other. The Pharisees became very angry and consulted among themselves how they might bring charges against him and put him to death. Christ then left the place, so as to avoid them, and went to the Sea of Galilee, a great multitude following him, and many of them that were sick he healed.

There was a feast held at Jerusalem, probably the feast of the Passover. It was the custom of our Lord to attend these feasts and thus to obey the law of Moses. He also attended them because there were so many people assembled there, which gave Christ an opportunity to teach the people.

Near the sheep-gate at Jerusalem there is a pool called the pool of Bethesda, the waters of which possessed remarkable healing properties. At the edge of the pool there were five porches, in which lay a number of diseased persons, blind, lame, or withered. At times there was a strange moving of the

waters, and whoever stepped in first after the troubling of the waters was cured of whatsoever disease he had.

How often many of those lying around were disappointed because they could not get in first!

THE WITHERED HAND.

This was the case with a poor cripple who lay there and who for thirty-eight years had been sick. He had long looked for an opportunity to get the benefit of the waters, but had failed to get it.

Jesus stood beside him and looked upon him with compas-

sion, because he knew how long he had been a sufferer. He said to him, Wilt thou be made whole? The man thought of the pool as the only means by which he might be restored to health, so his reply was that he could not get into the pool first after the troubling of the waters, because he had no one to put him in.

Jesus said to him, Rise, take up thy bed, and walk. And immediately the man was made whole and took up his bed and walked. The Jews, who had not seen the miracle, met the man who was cured and said to him, It is the Sabbath day. It is not lawful for thee to carry thy bed. The man replied, He that made me whole the same said unto me, Take up thy bed and walk. Then they asked him, What man is that which said unto thee, Take up thy bed and walk? The man did not know at that time, but he saw Jesus in the temple afterwards, and then went and told the Jews that it was Jesus who had made him whole. The Jews then persecuted Jesus, and sought to slay him because he had done these things on the Sabbath day; but Christ told the Jews that his Father had sent him to do those works, that he would do greater works, that men were called to repent of their sins and believe upon him, so that he might raise them to eternal life at the last day, and that if they did not then they would be lost forever in the world to come.

He told them also that if they read the Scriptures in the right way and believed Moses they would believe also in him, for Moses wrote concerning him, but if they did not believe Moses' writings how could they believe his words?

One very important act of Christ was the choosing of his apostles.

The night before, he went to a desert place alone, and was all the time in prayer to God. Before this he had his disciples about him, but now he gave a definite commission to twelve of these to preach his doctrines and cast evil spirits out of men, to heal the sick, and to travel about with him.

These twelve he called apostles. The word apostle means, *one sent*. Their names were Peter, and Andrew his brother, James, and John his brother, Philip, and Bartholomew, Thomas, and Matthew the publican, James, and Lebbeus, Simon, and Judas Iscariot.

Some think that Christ spent the night in prayer on the peak of the mountain and then descended, after he had selected his apostles, to a more level spot of ground, where he sat down and taught a multitude that came to hear him, pronouncing various classes of persons happy, the description of which we have in these verses, called the Beatitudes, and which are as follows :

THE POOL OF BETHESDA.

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. The poor in spirit are those who think humbly of themselves, and feel that God alone can make them good.

Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted. These have a holy sorrow for their sins and for the sad condition of the world on account of sin.

Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth. The meek are gentle towards others and patient under any injuries which may be done to them.

Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness. Those who desire earnestly the grace of God and strive after it shall have their desires satisfied by the rich manifestations of grace.

Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy. Only those who are merciful to others shall receive the mercy of God.

Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God. Purity enlightens the soul, while sin blinds it.

Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God. Peacemakers are those who will not quarrel with others and who try to keep others from quarrelling.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Those who suffer for Christ's sake will be greatly honored in heaven, since Christ told his disciples when they were treated badly that they should be exceedingly glad, for great would be their reward hereafter. Christ wanted them to be lights to the world, and whether men wanted the light or not they must let them see it so that some might be led out of darkness into the same light.

Christ told the people that he had not come to destroy the law, but to fulfil it, not only in the letter as the Jews did, but also in the spirit. He said that the righteousness of his followers must be of a better kind than that of the Scribes and Pharisees, or else they could not enter the kingdom of heaven.

The law of Moses forbade men to kill each other and commanded that murderers should be punished, but, said Christ, I say unto you that if you are angry with your brother without reason you are liable to punishment.

Jesus told his hearers that one of the conditions of acceptable worship to God was that there must be no ill feelings between us and others, and if there were, we must go and be reconciled with them before God will receive what we offer to him.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT.

God wants our thoughts to be pure, and when others treat us badly he wants us to treat them with kindness.

When we pray we are to enter into our closets, and not stand in a public place where we would be seen by men When we fast we are not to assume sadness of countenance so as to attract attention; we are not to be lovers of money; we are not to be so much concerned about food and raiment as about serving God and promoting his glory, remembering that if we serve him, all the necessaries of life will be given us.

Christ has commanded us to be careful about judging other persons, telling us that with what judgment we judge we shall be judged; we are to pray earnestly to him with the confidence that he will answer us.

The gate which leads to heaven is strait, and this is the one we are to enter; while the one that leads to hell is broad, and this is the one which the multitudes enter.

The mere using of God's name, saying, Lord, Lord, will not be enough to gain an entrance to heaven; we must also do the will of our Father which is in heaven.

Many will say to God at the judgment, Lord, Lord, have we not preached in thy name and in thy name cast devils out of men and done many other wonderful works? But, said Christ, I will say unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

Some men, Christ tells us, build their houses upon a rock, because they hear his sayings and do them; while others build their houses on the sand, because they hear his sayings but do them not. Houses built upon the rock will stand, but those built upon the sand, when the rain descends and the floods come, will fall, and their ruin will be great.

The people were astonished at the great wisdom of Christ's teachings upon the mount, because he spoke as one who had authority and understood what he said, and not like the Scribes.

CHAPTER XXXV.

THE CENTURION—THE WIDOW'S SON—MAGDALEN—PARABLES OF THE RICH FOOL, THE SOWER, THE WHEAT AND THE TARES, THE MUSTARD SEED, THE LEAVEN, THE GREAT PEARL, AND THE NETS—STILLING THE TEMPEST—THE DEMONIAC.

WHEN Christ finished his sermon on the mount he went to

CHRIST AND THE CENTURION.

Capernaum. The elders of the synagogue brought him a message from a centurion who belonged to the Roman army.

This centurion had a servant who was sick, and he wanted Christ to heal him, but he was so humble that he first asked the rulers to make the request of Christ, and when he did plead with the Saviour himself he told him that he was not worthy that he should come under his roof, but if he would only say the word he knew that his servant would be healed.

He began to think that he had been too bold in asking Christ to go down to his house, and his faith in Christ's power was so strong that he reasoned as follows: I have authority over the soldiers which are under me, and I say to one, Go, and he goes, and to another, Come, and he comes. You have the same power over diseases, and this sickness will leave my servant when you tell it to go.

Christ was astonished, and declared that he had not found so great faith, no, not amongst the children of Israel, as this centurion had.

The next day Christ went into a city called Nain, and many of his disciples were with him, and a great multitude of people. When he came near the gate of the city he met a funeral procession. It was the funeral of a young man, an only son, and his mother was a widow, and she was sad and weeping for the loss of her son. When Christ saw her he had compassion on her and determined that he would remove her sorrow by restoring to her the son of her affection. Jesus said unto the mother, Weep not, and went and touched the bier. The bearers stood still, and Jesus said unto the one that was dead, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise. To the surprise of the multitude and the great joy of the mother, the young man that was dead sat up and began to speak and was restored unto his mother.

Jesus received an invitation from a Pharisee to come to his house and sit at meat with him. He went, and as he sat at meat a woman who had been a great sinner made her way amongst the guests till she stood at Jesus' feet, behind him weeping. She began to wash his feet with her tears and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and she kissed his feet and anointed them with ointment.

The teachings of the Saviour brought conviction to the heart of the poor sinful woman, and she now came for pardon and

manifested her sense of forgiveness and devotion in this beautiful manner.

The Pharisee, perhaps, invited Christ only because he want-

THE WIDOW'S SON BROUGHT TO LIFE.

ed a guest who was so popular and not because he desired instruction from Christ, and wanted salvation. This Pharisee knew the character of the woman and said within himself, If this man were a prophet he would have known the character

of this woman who has touched him, and would not have allowed her to remain near him.

Jesus knew the thoughts that were passing in the mind of the Pharisee and said to him, There was a certain money lender, to whom one man owed five hundred pence, and to whom, also, another owed fifty. None of them were able to pay him, so he freely forgave them both. Which of those

MAGDALEN WASHING CHRIST'S FEET.

two men, do you think, will have the greater love for this money-lender? Simon said, I suppose the one to whom he had forgiven most. Jesus said unto him, Thou hast rightly judged. Then he turned to the woman and said, Simon, seest thou this woman? I entered your house and you gave me no water for my feet, but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. You gave me no

kiss, but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. You did not anoint my head with oil, but she hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins which are many are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven the same loveth little.

Then Jesus said unto the woman, Thy sins are forgiven; thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace. By such words and kindness as Christ manifested to this woman, the multitudes

WASHING HANDS IN THE EAST.

were drawn to him, because they saw that he sympathized with their temporal and eternal needs, while the Scribes and Pharisees were filled with envy because, as a teacher, he had so much more influence amongst the common people than they.

A man was brought to Christ who was possessed with a devil and who was both blind and dumb, and he healed him, so that he could both speak and see. When the Pharisees heard of it their hatred of Jesus led them to say that he cast out devils by Beelzebub, the prince of the devils, while

Christ replied that Satan would never work against his own interests by dethroning himself.

One of Christ's parables describes a rich man, whose ground brought forth so plentifully and his harvest was so great that his barns were too small to contain the crops, and his vineyards were so full of fruit that he did not have room enough for them, and he began to inquire, What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits?

Then he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns and build greater ones, and in them I will put all my fruits and my goods; and I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years, take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said to him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, then who will have all those things which you have laid up? So will it be, said Jesus, with those who lay up treasure on earth, and are not rich towards God, because they do not try to please him.

At death all earthly wealth will be left behind, and those who have none in heaven will, after death, have none at all. Then Christ warned his disciples against anxiety concerning food and raiment, telling them that the life was more important than meat, and the body than raiment, and that God would be sure to send food to support the lives of those who trusted in him.

He reminded them that the ravens neither sowed seed in the field nor reaped a harvest, and that they had neither storehouse nor barn, yet God fed them. He told them that they were of greater importance in the sight of God, and hence God would be sure to take care of them.

He told them to consider the lilies how they grow; they neither toil nor spin to make clothing or to adorn themselves, and yet not even King Solomon in all his glory was arrayed with such splendor as they.

And if God took such pains with the lilies, and so clothed the grass which existed for a day and the next was cut down and cast into the oven, would he not more surely clothe them? They should seek first the kingdom of God, and God would provide all such things as they needed.

Christ wanted to show the people the condition of their

THE RICH FOOL.

hearts and the different effects which his preaching had upon those who heard it, so he spake unto them the parable of the sower.

By a parable is meant the setting forth of spiritual truth by an illustration from nature. Perhaps as he spake the parable he may have pointed to some Jewish farmer that was scattering seed in a field not far from where he and the people were.

He told them: A sower went into his field to sow. The seed which he sowed was of one kind, but different parts of the field were in different conditions. Some seed fell by the wayside, the hard-beaten path, where it could not sink into the earth and take root, and this was picked up by the birds which hovered over the field.

Some fell upon stony places where there was not much earth, where it grew up quickly, but when the sun came out it was scorched, because it had no depth of earth from which to get moisture, and quickly it withered away. Some seed fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked it. But the rest of the seed fell into good ground and brought forth a rich harvest, thirty, sixty, or an hundredfold more than was planted.

Our Lord explained this parable to his disciples, and told them that the seed was the truth of the gospel which he preached. Some of the people who heard did not understand, or were not much interested in it. Then the devil comes and blots the truth out of the memory.

The stony ground represents those hearts which received the truth with joy and endure for a while, but when persecution or tribulation arises because of the word, they are offended.

Those who receive seed among thorns hear the word, but the cares of life and the deceitfulness of riches and the pleasures of the world choke the word, and there is no fruit.

Some of the seed, however, fell in good ground. There were some who not only heard the word, but who also took it into their hearts and tried to remember and practise what they heard. This seed took root and sprang up and brought forth much fruit.

We see from this parable that much good seed that is sown never takes root or grows, but we are not to forget that the devil sows bad seed in human hearts while Christ sows good.

Our Lord shows this by another parable, called the parable of the wheat and the tares. He said that the kingdom of heaven was likened unto a man that sowed good seed in his

THE SOWER.

field, but while the husbandmen slept behold his enemy came and maliciously sowed tares among the wheat.

In Eastern countries an enemy, through malice, will sow bad seed in the field of another, and this seed will ripen and multiply before the good crop ripens, so that for years the owner of the field is tormented by noxious weeds.

Christ, in this parable, represents the farmer as telling his men who come to inform him of the existance of the tares,

that this evil was done by an enemy. He tells them, however, not to pull up the tares, lest in doing so they should pull up the wheat along with it, but let the tares and wheat grow together till the time of harvest, and then he would tell the reapers to gather first the tares and bind them in bundles to burn them, and to gather the wheat into his barn.

Christ explained this parable unto his disciples. He said

THE ENEMY SOWING TARES.

that the good seed was sown by the Son of Man—that is, by himself—and that the field was the world, the good seed was the truth which he preached, the wheat that grew meant the good people of the world, while the tares meant the wicked.

Jesus allows the good and the bad people of the world to remain together, as the farmer lets the wheat and tares grow together in the same field, but at the judgment-day he will

tell the angels to gather up the good and carry them to heaven, while the bad will be burned with unquenchable fire.

Jesus also told his disciples that the kingdom of heaven was like a grain of mustard-seed which a man sowed in his field, which is the least of all seed, but when it is grown it is greatest amongst herbs, and becomes a tree, so that the birds

LEAVEN.

of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof So it is with the work of grace in the heart of the Christian. It may begin small, but it continues to grow till, from a babe, he becomes a man in Christ Jesus.

Jesus said that the kingdom of heaven was like unto leaven, or yeast, which a woman took and hid in three measures of

meal till all the meal was leavened. The leaven is the gospel, which seems to be hid away or lost among a mass of dull hearers. But after a while its influence begins to be felt, and the whole mass is brought under its influence.

Jesus also said that the kingdom of heaven was like a treasure hid in a field, which, when a man finds, he sells all

SEEKING GREAT PEARLS.

that he possesses and buys that field; or it is like a merchant man seeking pearls, who finds one very valuable, and not having enough money to buy it, goes and sells all that he possesses and buys the very costly pearl.

The pearl of great price is righteousness, the love of God, and eternal life. When men really find these they will part with all that is wrong, no matter how much they like it, that they may be heirs of eternal life.

Christ compared the kingdom of heaven also unto a net

which was cast into the sea, and in which were gathered fish of every kind. When it was full, they drew it to shore and found a great variety of fishes in it, and sat down and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. Jesus said that it should be so at the end of the world. Angels shall come and sever the wicked from among the just, and shall

PARABLE OF THE NET.

cast them into the furnace of fire: there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth.

In the evening Christ and his disciples entered into a boat that they might cross the Sea of Galilee. While in the water a great storm arose, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was full. Jesus fell asleep in the hinder part of the ship,

because he was so tired from the labors of the day. The disciples were greatly afraid, and came to him and woke him up, saying, Master, carest thou not we perish? Then he arose and rebuked the winds and said unto the sea, Peace, be still. And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful? How is it that ye

STILLING THE TEMPEST.

have no faith? And the disciples wondered greatly, and said, What kind of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?

When they came to the other side of the Sea of Galilee and had entered into the country of the Gadarenes, they met a man with an unclean spirit coming out of the tombs. He lived among the tombs, and his muscles were so strong that no

man was able to bind him with chains or fetters, because he would break both of them in pieces.

None could tame him; night and day he was in the mountains and in the tombs, crying and cutting himself with stones. When he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, and said aloud, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the Most High God? I beseech thee, torment me not. Christ

JESUS AND THE DEMONIAC.

asked the evil spirit that was in the man what his name was. And the Spirit said, My name is Legion, for we are many.

Near the mountain was a great herd of swine feeding, and the devils requested that Jesus would send them into the swine. Jesus told them to go, and when the demons entered the swine, the whole herd ran quickly down a steep place into the sea and perished in the waters.

Those who fed the swine ran into the city and told what had happened, and all the people went out and found the man that had been possessed with the devil, sitting and clothed and in his right mind. And they were afraid, and they besought Jesus to leave their country.

When he was entering the ship to leave, the man who had been possessed with the demons wanted to go with him, but Jesus told him to go to his home and to his friends, and tell them all that the Lord had done for him. And the man departed and told of the great things Christ had done for him and all who heard of them marvelled.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS—HELPING THE BLIND AND DUMB—PETER WALKING ON THE WATER—GENNESARET—THE WOMAN OF SIDON—MIRACLE AT GALILEE.

Christ left the country of the Gadarenes, and crossed the lake, and came again to Capernaum, where a great crowd awaited him.

One of the rulers of the synagogue, named Jairus, when he saw Jesus, fell at his feet, and said, My daughter lies at the point of death. I pray thee to come and lay thy hands on her and she shall live. Jesus went with him, and many people followed and thronged him. Among the throng was a woman who had suffered for over twelve years from an issue of blood, and had spent all her money on physicians, yet instead of getting better she became worse. She heard of the great power of Jesus, and had such faith in him that she said to herself, If I may touch but his clothes I shall be whole. And as soon as she had touched Jesus she felt within herself that she had been cured. Christ knew that power had left him, and asked, Who touched my clothes? His disciples wondered at this question, because the crowd was so great that several must have touched him.

Jesus looked around to see who it was that had touched him for healing. And the woman who had been healed came, fearing and trembling, and fell down before him and told him all

CURED BY TOUCHING HIS GARMENT.

the truth. And Jesus said unto her, Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.

Jairus had to wait all this time, concerned as he was about his daughter, and while Christ was yet speaking to the woman the message came to Jairus that his daughter was dead, and that he need not trouble the Saviour any further. Jesus

heard the message as it was being delivered to the ruler, and he said unto him, Be not afraid; only believe. He went to the house of the ruler, and Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the maiden went with him. He entered the chamber where the dead one lay, and said to those who were weeping, Why do you weep? the damsel is not dead, but sleepeth. And they laughed him to scorn, because he said the maid only slept. And he put them all out of the room and took three of his apostles, Peter, James, and John, and the father and mother of the child, and went into the room where she was lying. And he took her by the hand and said unto her, Damsel, I say unto thee arise. And she arose and walked. And people were astonished with a great astonishment. And he told them to give her meat.

When Jesus left the ruler's house, two blind men followed him, crying and saying, Thou Son of David, have mercy on us. Jesus said to them, Believe ye that I am able to do this? They said unto him, Yea, Lord. Then he touched their eyes, saying, According to your faith be it unto you. And their eyes were opened. Jesus told them not to tell any one of it, but instead of doing this they spread abroad his fame in all that country.

And they brought to him a dumb man possessed with a devil, and after Christ cast out the devil the dumb spake; and the people said, It was never so seen in Israel. But the Pharisees said, He casteth out devils through the prince of the devils.

Jesus returned to Nazareth, where he was brought up. When here eighteen months before, he preached to the people and they attempted his life, but they had heard of his great works, and he preached to them again, hoping they would receive him. So he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and taught the people. They wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth. But they said, Is not this the carpenter's son? Is not his mother called Mary? and his brethren and his sisters, are they not all with us? And they were offended in him and would not believe on him. Hence he did not many mighty works there, because of their unbelief. He only put his hands on a few sick folks and healed them.

When Jesus looked around upon the people and thought of their condition he was moved with compassion towards them

THE DAUGHTER OF JAIRUS.

and told his disciples to pray to the Lord of the harvest that he would send forth laborers into his harvest. Jesus is Lord of the harvest, and he answered the prayer which he taught to

his disciples by calling twelve of them, to whom he gave power against unclean spirits, to cast them out and to heal all manner of sickness and all manner of diseases, and to raise the dead, and told them also to preach that the kingdom of heaven was at hand.

Jesus gave his apostles power to work miracles, so that the people might be convinced that God was with them. He told them to whom they were to go; not to the Samaritans, but to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. Israel was God's chosen people, and to them the gospel was to be preached first. They were to take no gold nor silver in their purses, nor change of clothing. God would provide for them. They were not to expect to receive kind treatment everywhere they went. They were going forth as sheep among wolves, but the hairs of their head were all numbered, and whosoever should give one of them a cup of cold water because he was a disciple, that person should in nowise lose his reward.

When the people saw the great miracle which Christ wrought in the desert, when he fed five thousand people by multiplying five barley loaves and two small fishes, they said he was of a truth that prophet that should come into the world.

They were about to take him by force to make him a king. Jesus, not desiring the kingly honors of earth, departed into a mountain himself alone, where no doubt he spent some time in prayer to God. He told his disciples to get into a ship, and to go before him unto the other side. They did not like to leave their Master, either because they loved him so much or else because they would like to have seen him made a king, as the multitude proposed.

While the disciples were in the boat on the lake a storm suddenly arose, and the ship was tossed with the waves in the midst of the sea. This alarmed the disciples, and to add to their fears they saw the form of a man walking on the sea, and thinking it was a spirit, they cried out for fear. Jesus said to them, Be of good cheer; it is I; be not afraid.

Peter answered and said, Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water. Jesus told him to come, and Peter stepped out on the water to go to his Master. Soon his faith

failed him; he took his eye off the Saviour and placed it on the foaming waves, and, losing sight of his Master, he began to sink. He cried, saying, Lord, save me! And Jesus stretched

PETER WALKING ON THE WATER.

forth his hand, and caught him, and said, O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?

Jesus and Peter then went into the ship, when the wind ceased, and those in the ship worshipped him, saying, Of a truth

thou art the Son of God. When they reached the shore, which was the land of Gennesaret, the people knew him and sent into all the country round about and brought unto him all that were diseased, and asked him if they might not touch the hem of his garment. Jesus let them, and as many as touched were made perfectly whole.

When the people found that Jesus had left them, and saw the disciples cross the sea in a boat, they went to Capernaum,

GENNESARET.

looking for him. They found him at the other side of the sea, and said unto him, Master, when did you come here? Jesus answered, Ye seek me not because of the miracles ye saw, but because ye did eat of the loaves and were filled. Labor not for the meat which perishes, but for that which endures unto everlasting life.

They said, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus said, The work of God is that ye believe on him whom he has sent.

CHRIST THE CONSOLATOR.

This is what the Jews refused to do, because Jesus was not the kind of Messiah they expected. They wanted a man of pomp and splendor, who would make of them a great, independent people, instead of a poor man, as Jesus was, who would tell them they were sinful and must repent of their sins.

Many of those who had followed him, when they heard the doctrines which he preached, went back and would not walk

SIDON.

any more with him. Then Jesus said to his twelve apostles, Will ye also go away and leave me? Peter answered, Lord, to whom shall we go if we leave thee? for thou hast the words of eternal life.

Jesus answered, I have chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil. He meant Judas Iscariot, whom he knew would betray and sell him to the chief priests and elders that they

might put him to death, for these men hated Jesus as bitterly as did the Scribes and Pharisees. Jesus continued a short time in the plain of Gennesaret, performing many miracles,

JESUS AND THE SYROPHENICIAN WOMAN.

but the hatred of the Pharisees became so great that he left and went into the coasts of Tyre and Sidon. A woman who was a Syrophenician came to him and besought him on behalf of her daughter, who was grievously vexed with a devil.

Christ at first gave her little encouragement. He told her she was not one of the Jews, and that it was to them he was sent. He did this to try her, but she persevered and worshipped him, saying, Lord, help me. Jesus told her that the children's bread should not be given unto the dogs, meaning that the Jews were children, and that the Gentiles were dogs, or strangers from the commonwealth of Israel. She said, Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table. Jesus said, O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt. And her daughter became well from that same hour.

Jesus then left the coasts of Tyre and Sidon, and went to the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Here a man who was both deaf and dumb was brought unto him, and he was requested to put his hand on him.

The Lord took him aside, and put his fingers into his ears, and he spat, and touched his tongue, and, looking up to heaven, he sighed and said, Be opened. And the string of his tongue loosed and he spoke plain.

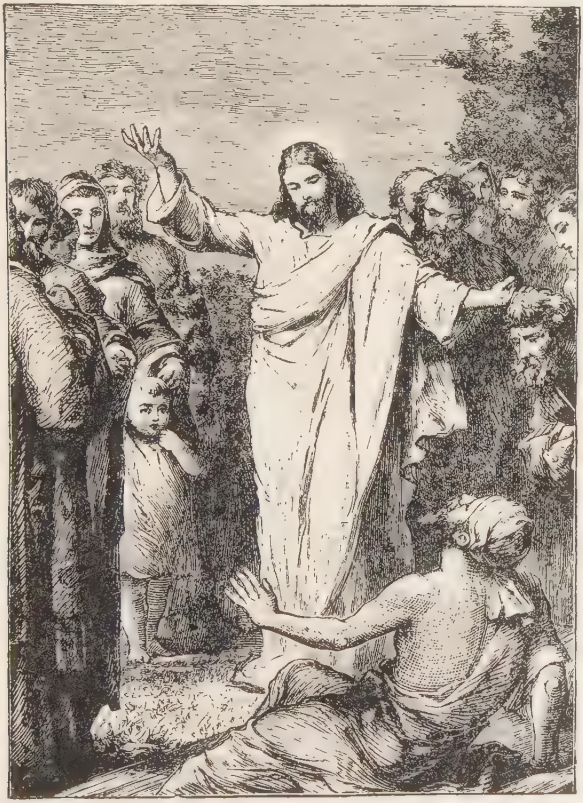
A great multitude assembled where Jesus was, and they had nothing to eat. The Lord had compassion on them, and said, They have had nothing to eat for three days, and if I send them away fasting, they will faint by the way, for they have come a long distance.

The disciples said, How can a man satisfy such a multitude as this with bread in the wilderness? Jesus asked, How many loaves have ye? They said, Seven and a few small fishes. He told the people to sit down on the ground, and he gave thanks and brake the loaves and the fishes and gave to his disciples to set before the people. There were about four thousand people fed, and they did all eat and were filled, and they took up of the fragments that were left seven baskets full.

Having wrought this miracle our Lord entered with his disciples into a ship and came into the coasts of Magdala. Here the Pharisees asked him for a sign from heaven, but Jesus denounced them as hypocrites, and told them that no sign would be given them but the sign of the prophet Jonas. That as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale,

so would the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Then Jesus left this region and came to Bethsaida. Here they brought a blind man to him that he might give him his



THE BLIND MAN RESTORED TO SIGHT.

sight. Jesus spat on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, and asked him if he saw aught. And he looked up and said, I see men as trees walking. Then Christ put his hands again upon his eyes and made him look up. And his sight was restored, so that now he could see clearly.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

TEACHING THE DISCIPLES—THE TRANSFIGURATION—DRIVING OUT THE EVIL SPIRIT—PETER AND THE TRIBUTE MONEY—RETURNING TO JERUSALEM—THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES—PARABLE OF THE KING AND HIS SERVANT—LITTLE CHILDREN—SICKNESS AND HEAVEN.

From Bethsaida Jesus went with his disciples to Cæsarea Philippi. On the way he asked his disciples, Whom do men say that I am? They said, Some say John the Baptist come back to earth; some say, Elias; and others, One of the prophets risen from the dead.

Then Jesus asked them, But whom say ye that I am? Peter replied, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus then began to show his disciples how that he must go up to Jerusalem and suffer many things from the elders, chief priests, and Scribes, and be put to death and after three days rise again.

These things the disciples could not understand, and Peter said, Be it far from thee, Lord; this shall not be unto thee. But Jesus knew that he had been sent into the world to suffer these things, and that if he did not die the people could not be saved from their sins.

Therefore he rebuked Peter, and said to him, Get thee behind me, Satan, for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of man. And if any man wants to be my disciple, he must deny himself of his own pleasures, and take up his cross and follow me. But what would it profit a man were he to gain all the pleasures of the world and lose his own soul?

After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John, the same three disciples who were with him when he raised the daughter of Jairus from the dead, and brought them up into a high mountain, that they might see his glory and so be strengthened for trials and service which were to come.

Jesus began to pray, while his disciples went to sleep, and when they awoke they saw their Master as they had never seen

him before. The fashion of his countenance was altered, and his raiment was white and glistening like snow. St. Luke says, His face did shine as the sun. And there talked with him two men, Moses who gave the Law and Elijah the greatest prophet. The subject of their conversation was the death of the Saviour, which should take place at Jerusalem. The disciples knew that it was Moses and Elias who were with Christ, and they wanted to stay there. So Peter said to Jesus, Master, it is good for us to be here ; let us make three tabernacles and stay here. One for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias.

While Peter was speaking, a bright cloud overshadowed them, and a voice came out of the cloud which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased : hear ye him.

When the disciples heard the voice they were sore afraid, and fell on their faces, but Jesus came and touched them and said, Arise, and be not afraid. And when they looked around they saw no man save Jesus only, for Moses and Elias had disappeared.

On his way down from the mountain Jesus told them not to tell the vision to any one till the Son of man be risen from the dead. But the disciples could not understand what Jesus meant when he spoke of rising from the dead. When they were come down from the mountain they found the rest of the apostles surrounded by a great multitude of people, and amongst them certain of the Scribes.

While Jesus was on the mount a man, whose son was possessed with an evil spirit, asked their help, but they were unable to cast out the spirit. This man came to Jesus, and said, Master, I beseech thee have mercy upon my son, for he is mine only child, and is tormented by an evil spirit. I took him to thy disciples, but they could not heal him. Jesus said, Bring thy son hither. While he was coming to Jesus the devil threw him down and tare him, and he rolled on the ground till he foamed at the mouth. Jesus asked the father, How long is it since this came unto him? And he said, When he was a child, and often it has cast him into the fire and into the water to destroy him. Then Jesus told the unclean spirit to come out of him, and to enter into him no more. And the

spirit cried out and rent him sore and came out of him. The young man was as one dead, but Jesus took him by the hand and lifted him up, and he arose.

Jesus went through Galilee and came to Capernaum. Here the tribute money was being collected. This money was paid by every male Israelite who was twenty years of age, and was used in the service of the sanctuary at Jerusalem. The collectors came to Peter and asked, Does not your Master pay tribute? Peter said, Yes, and went into the house to get the money. Jesus knew what the men had asked, and said to Peter, Of whom do the kings of the earth receive tribute? of their own children or of strangers? Peter said, Of strangers. Jesus said, Then are the children free. He meant that, inasmuch as the temple was his Father's house, he was not under any obligation to pay towards supporting it. Christ, however, did not want them to stumble at his refusal to pay as others did, so he told Peter to go to the sea and cast in a hook, and in the mouth of the first fish that he would catch he would find a piece of money. This he was to give as tribute for the Lord and himself.

Christ had often taught his disciples concerning the kind of kingdom that he came to set up in the world, that it would be a spiritual kingdom, established in human hearts; and that instead of his being made a great king, who should sit on an earthly throne, he should be put to death at Jerusalem as a sacrifice for the sin of the world.

They had the idea that his kingdom would be a great earthly kingdom, and at one time they had a dispute among themselves as to who should have the highest position in it. Christ rebuked both their wrong worldly notions concerning his kingdom, and also their pride, shown by each of them wanting to occupy the highest position in it. He rebuked their pride, and showed them how foolish their worldly notions were in this way: He called a little child to him and set him in the midst of them, and said, Except ye be converted and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. And whosoever shall humble himself as that little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven.

Christ also told his disciples that if their hand or foot should

lead them to offend God—that is, if there were any sin they loved as much as they loved their right hand, foot, or eye—they must give up that sin if they wanted to be saved, and that it would be better for them to do so than to keep the sins

PETER AND THE TRIBUTE MONEY.

and at last be excluded from heaven and be cast into hell, the fire of which would never be quenched.

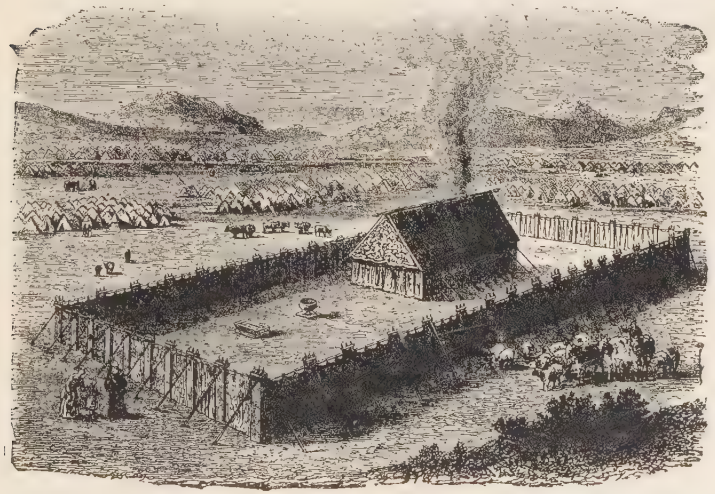
The feast of Tabernacles drew near. This feast was a thanksgiving for the harvest, and was held also in remembrance of the time when the Jews dwelt in tents in the wilderness. The brethren of Jesus did not believe him to be Divine,

yet they were proud of the works which he could do. Hence they urged him to go up to Jerusalem and show his power to the multitude. But he told them to go, and he would remain a while longer in Galilee, because the proper time for him to go had not yet come. After his brethren had gone up, he also went up secretly. He went through Samaria, but the Samaritans did not receive him, and the disciples were so provoked that they asked Christ if he would not consent, and they would call down fire from heaven and consume them, as Elias had done in former days. Christ told them that he had not come to destroy men, but to save them.

At the feast of Tabernacles there was great excitement concerning Christ. The people inquired one of another if they thought he would come to the feast. Christ reached Jerusalem and taught openly in the temple, which caused the people to wonder very much, because the rulers were seeking to kill him.

On the last day of the feast Jesus had before his mind the water from the pool of Siloam, which was brought in a golden vessel and was poured before the brazen altar. He told the people of the living waters of the Spirit, which should flow from the heart of those who believed upon him after he had entered heaven. The people were greatly interested in his teaching, and many believed on him. The chief priests and Pharisees sent officers to take him, but they returned without him, and when asked why they had not brought him they replied, Never man spake like this man. The next day Jesus was in the temple again. The Pharisees brought to him a woman who had been taken in adultery. They placed her in the midst, and said to Jesus that Moses had commanded that for such a crime she should be stoned, but what sayest thou? In this way they hoped to find a charge against him, so that they could put him to death. If Jesus said she should be let go, then they would say that he taught contrary to the law of Moses; if, on the other hand, he said that she should be put to death, then they hoped that this would displease the people Jesus stooped down and with his finger wrote on the ground. Some think that the words which he wrote were those which he afterwards spoke to the woman when her accusers had

all left. They continued asking him for his decision as to what should be done with the convicted woman. Jesus said to them, He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. Each of them felt self-condemned, and they withdrew, one by one, till all were gone, and when Jesus lifted himself up again, for he had now stooped the second time to write on the ground, he found himself alone with the woman. He said to her, Woman, hath no man condemned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, Neither do I condemn thee: go and sin no more.



THE FEAST OF TABERNACLES.

Jesus told his disciples that wherever they met to worship him, even if there were only two or three together, his Spirit would be in their midst. He laid down a rule by which they were to treat one another when they trespassed against each other.

Peter asked him, saying, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? Till seven times? Jesus said unto him, I say not unto you until seven times seven, but until seventy times seven. Then Jesus told them a parable, which showed how God would deal with us and our sins

if we failed to forgive others when they sinned against us. He told them of a king who reckoned with his servants the amount of money they owed him. One was brought to him that owed ten thousands talents. He had no money with which to pay the debt, so the king commanded him to be sold, with his wife and children, and all the goods which he had, and said the money received should go to pay the debt. The servant fell on his knees before the king, and said, Lord, have patience with me, and I will pay thee all.

The king was moved with compassion toward him and forgave him the debt. But the same servant went out and found one of his fellow-servants which owed him a hundred pence: and he laid his hands on him, and took him by the throat, saying, Pay me that thou owest. And his fellow-servant fell down at his feet and besought him, saying, Have patience with me, and I will pay thee all. And he would not, but went and cast him into prison till he should pay the debt. His other fellow-servants were very sorry for this, and went and told their lord what had been done. Then the king called this man, and said unto him, O thou wicked servant, I forgave thee all that debt because thou desiredst me; you should also have had compassion on your fellow-servant as I had pity on you. And the king was wroth and delivered him to those who would torment him till he should pay all that was due unto him. Jesus said, So shall also my heavenly Father do unto you if ye from your hearts forgive not every one his brother their trespasses.

Then little children were brought to Jesus by their parents that he might lay his hands on them and bless them. The disciples wanted those who brought them not to do so, because they did not want to have their Master disturbed in his talk. But Jesus said, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus meant that every one who came to him must come with child-like faith, and from such he would never turn away. And he laid his hands on them, and blesssd them, and departed from that place.

On the way a young man, a ruler, who was rich, came to him and said, Master, what good thing shall I do that I may have

eternal life? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments. The young man said, All these have I kept from my youth up; what yet do I lack? Jesus said unto him, If thou wilt be perfect, go sell that thou hast and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven, and come follow me. But when the young man heard these

JESUS BLESSING THE CHILDREN.

words he went away sorrowful, for he was very rich. Then Jesus said to his disciples, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. When the disciples heard this they were astonished exceedingly, and said, Who then can be saved? Jesus said to them, With men this is impossible, but with God all things are possible, meaning that God can and will save men in spite of their riches.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

THE TEN LEPERS — THE POOL OF SILOAM — FEAST OF THE DEDICATION—PARABLES OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD AND THE GOOD SAMARITAN—MARY AND MARTHA—RAISING LAZARUS FROM THE DEAD—PROPHECY OF CAIAPHAS—THE SENDING OUT OF THE SEVENTY DISCIPLES.

As Jesus entered a certain village he met with ten men who were lepers, one of whom was a Samaritan. In the sad affliction which was upon these poor sufferers they forgot their hatred to each other. They stood afar off, because the law of the Jews forbade their coming near those who were well, and they cried, saying, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. Now Moses had commanded that if a leper was healed he should go to the priest, that the latter might see if he was perfectly well and if he would give him permission to return to his home and family. Therefore, when Jesus heard those lepers crying out to him, he said, Go and show yourselves to the priest. And as they went they were healed. Christ, who alone had power to heal this terrible malady, commanded the disease to leave them as soon as he saw they had faith in him. They showed their faith by going to the priest as the Lord commanded them.

One of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice gave praise to God, and fell down on his face at the feet of Jesus, giving him thanks. This man was the Samaritan. Though all of the ten were healed, this was the only one that returned to praise his deliverer.

Jesus said unto him, Were there not ten cleansed, but where are the nine? Only this stranger has returned to give glory to God. Jesus called him a stranger, because he was a Samaritan, while the other nine were Jews. And Jesus said to the Samaritan, Arise and go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole.

Christ was in the temple teaching and much of his doctrine the Jews could not understand. He told them that he was from above, meaning that he was God as well as man, while

they were from beneath, by which he meant that they were worldly in their hearts and lives. He told them that he was older than Abraham, and that Abraham rejoiced to see his day and was glad. The Jews understood our Lord to mean that, as the Eternal Son of God, he had lived before Abraham, though he was at this time, thousands of years after, living amongst them. They could not understand this and thought Christ to be only a man like themselves. Hence they took up stones to stone him, saying that he was guilty of blasphemy in making himself equal with God. When they took up the stones to cast at him, Jesus hid himself by his Divine power, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them.

As our Lord passed by he saw a man that was blind from his birth. Jesus stopped, perhaps to listen to the appeal of the poor man, when the disciples asked him who had sinned, this man or his parents, that he should be born blind. The idea was common that suffering was inflicted as a punishment for sin, and the disciples wondered if this man could have been punished before he sinned, or punished for the sins of his parents.

Jesus told them that the blindness was due to none of the causes which they mentioned, but that the power of God might be shown in giving him new eyes. Jesus spat on the ground, and made clay of the spittle, and put it on the eyes of the blind man, and then told him to go and wash in the pool of Siloam. This must have been a great trial of his faith, but he was equal to the trial.

He had such confidence in Christ that he went to the pool, and washed, and came back seeing. Those who had known him when he was blind said, Is not this he that sat and begged? Some said, This is he: others said, He is like him: but he said, I am he. They asked him, How were your eyes opened? He said, A man named Jesus made clay and anointed mine eyes, and said unto me, Go to the pool of Siloam, and wash: and I went and washed, and I received sight. They said unto him, Where is he? He said, I know not. They brought the man to the Pharisees, and the Pharisees also wanted to know how he had been made well. The man, born blind, told them that Jesus put clay on his eyes, and when he

had washed in the pool of Siloam as Jesus told him, he could see. It was on the Sabbath day that Jesus wrought the miracle upon the blind man, and some of the Pharisees said, The man that cured you must be a sinner, because he does not keep

"WHEREAS I WAS BLIND, NOW I SEE."

the Sabbath day. Others said, How can a man that is a sinner do such miracles? Then they asked the man that had been born blind what he thought of him, and he said, He is a prophet. The Jews would not believe the man, and they called his parents and asked them, Is this your son, who you

say was born blind? How then does he now see? His parents said, We know that this is our son and that he was born blind, but by what means he now sees we do not know; he is of age, ask him; he will speak for himself. His parents were afraid to say that it was Jesus who wrought the miracle, because the Jews were determined to put any man out of the synagogue who should say that Jesus was the Saviour.

The Pharisees spoke to the man that had been blind, a second time, and told him to give God the praise, because the man who put the clay on his eyes was a sinner. He said, Whether he be a sinner I know not; one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see.

They said to him again, What did he to thee? How opened he thine eyes? He answered them, I have told you already, and ye did not hear: wherefore would ye hear it again? Do you wish to be his disciples? Then they reviled him, and said, You are his disciple; but we are Moses' disciples. We know that God spake unto Moses; as for this fellow, we know not from whence he is. The man said to them, It seems very strange that you know not from whence he is, and yet he has opened mine eyes. If this man had not come from God he could not have given me my sight. This enraged the Pharisees, who said to him, You were altogether born in sins, and do you teach us? And they would not allow him to come into the synagogue.

When Jesus saw him after they had cast him out he asked him, Dost thou believe on the Son of God? The man replied, Who is he, Lord, that I may believe on him? Jesus said, Thou hast both seen him, and it is he that talketh with thee. And the man said, Lord, I believe. And he worshipped him.

Jesus was at the feast of the dedication, which was held in remembrance of the purification of the temple. It was held in winter. Jesus told them the parable of the good shepherd, declaring that he was that good shepherd who gave his life for the sheep. All those who entered not into the sheepfold, but climbed up some other way, the same was a thief and a robber.

Christ's sheep know his voice, and follow him, but a stranger they will not for follow, they know not the voice of strangers

The hireling, when he saw the wolf coming, fled, because he did not care for the sheep; but Christ said that he was the good shepherd, and knew his sheep, and was known by them, and he so loved the sheep that he laid down his life for them.

The Jews gathered around him and said to him, How long do you keep us in doubt? If you be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus said unto them, I told you, and ye believed not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me, and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish. They are safe in the hand of

JERUSALEM TO JERICHO.

Jesus, and no man is able to pluck them out of his hand. They are in his Father's charge, and none can take them from him. Jesus and his Father are one. When the Lord had said that he and his Father were one, then the Jews took up stones to stone him, accusing him of blasphemy in saying that he was equal with God.

Another day, when Jesus was teaching in the temple, a lawyer stood up to ask him questions, saying, Master, what shall I do that I may have eternal life? Jesus said to him, What is written in the law? How readest thou? You expound the law. The lawyer answered, Thou shalt love the Lord

thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind, and thy neighbor as thyself. Jesus said, Thou hast answered rightly ; this do, and thou shalt live. But the lawyer, wanting to excuse him-

THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

self, said, And who is my neighbor? Jesus answered by a parable, saying, A certain man was going from Jerusalem to Jericho, and he fell among thieves. The road between Jerusalem and Jericho is a very dangerous one, being infested with robbers who take away from travellers their money and

raiment. Christ refers to one who had not only lost all his possessions in this way, but who was so cruelly wounded that he was left half dead by the roadside. As the wounded man lay there a certain priest came down by chance that way. Perhaps he was returning from the performance of his duties in the temple. When he saw the wounded man lying on the roadside, instead of helping him he passed by on one side. Perhaps he was very particular in reference to the letter of the law, but did not have much of its spirit. He thought of his own safety, and went quickly on, lest there might be robbers lurking in the neighborhood, who might attack him. After the priest came a Levite, who also served in the temple. He came and looked on him, and then passed by on the other side. The conduct of this man may have hurt the wounded man more than that of the priest, who, while he passed by without helping him, yet did not stop to look at him. Lastly there came a Samaritan, between whose people and the Jews there was no intercourse, but, on the contrary, feelings of the bitterest kind. When he saw the wounded man he was moved with compassion, and did not leave him to die by the hand of robbers and murderers. This Samaritan knelt by the side of the poor traveller and poured oil and wine into the bleeding wounds. He lifted him from the ground and set him upon his own beast, and brought him to an inn. When leaving the inn next day he gave money to the owner and said, Take care of him, and whatever more you may spend on him I will give you when I come back this way.

Jesus then asked the lawyer which of these three men did he think was neighbor to the man who fell among thieves. And he said, The one who showed mercy on him. Then said Jesus unto him, Go, and do thou likewise. Jesus taught the lawyer and teaches us that every one who needs help is our neighbor, and that love in the heart for Jesus prompts us to be good and kind to our fellow-men.

Jesus came one day to a village named Bethany, which was not far from Jerusalem. A certain woman named Martha received him into her house, and in that home in Bethany he often lodged afterwards. Martha had a sister named Mary, who sat at the feet of Jesus to hear the lessons which he

taught. She loved her Lord and Master very much. Martha was the housekeeper and was troubled and anxious because she thought she had so much work to do. She came to Jesus and said, Lord, dost thou not care that my sister hath left me to serve alone? Bid her come and help me. Jesus said unto her, Martha, Martha, thou art careful and troubled about many things: but one thing is needful; and Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her. Jesus meant that Mary had chosen wisely in wanting to be

BETHANY.

near him; and that to give Christ and his words the first place in our hearts and thoughts was to choose something that we never could lose.

The sisters who lived in the home at Bethany had a brother named Lazarus, and he was very sick, so the sisters sent a messenger to Jesus, saying, Beloved, he whom thou lovest is sick. They sent this kind of a message because they knew that Jesus loved them as well as their brother Lazarus. When Jesus received the message he said, This sickness is for the glory of God, that my power as his Son may be shown in raising Lazarus from the dead.

Jesus remained two days longer in the same place where he was until he knew that Lazarus was dead. The faith of the sisters must have been sorely tried while he lay on his sick

MARY AND MARTHA.

bed. How earnestly they waited for the return of the messenger whom they sent to Jesus, and how sad they felt when they saw their brother's body cold in death. But Jesus had a great purpose in the delay. He said to his disciples, Let

us go into Judea again. Our friend Lazarus sleepeth ; but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Afterwards Jesus told them plainly that Lazarus was dead. The disciples, I suppose, did not understand what Christ meant when he spoke of the death of Lazarus, although in the Old Testament as well as in the New people who die are said to sleep, the resurrec-

LAZARUS RAISED FROM THE DEAD.

tion being the morning following the sleep of death, just as the night, when we sleep in this world, is followed by the morning of another day.

When Jesus came to Bethany he found that Lazarus had been in the grave four days already. Martha went out and met Jesus, as soon as she heard he was coming, and said to

him, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. But I know that even now whatever you ask of God, God will give it unto thee. Jesus told her that her brother should rise again. Martha said she knew that he would rise in the resurrection at the last day, but Jesus replied by saying, I am the resurrection and the life, and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. When Mary heard that Jesus had come, she went and fell down at his feet, and said, just as Martha had said, Lord, if thou hadst been here my brother had not died. Jesus came to the grave weeping, groaning in spirit, and troubled, and said, Where have ye laid him? They say unto him, Lord, come and see. Jesus wept. Then said the Jews, Behold how he loved him. And some of them said, Could not this man which opened the eyes of the blind have caused this man to live? Jesus again groaning in himself came to the grave, which was a cave, with a stone at the mouth of it, and told them to take away the stone. And when they had removed the stone, he lifted up his eyes, and said, Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard my prayer, and then he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus come forth. And he came forth with his grave-clothes on and his face bound about with a napkin. And Jesus said unto them, Loose him and let him go; and Lazarus walked in the midst of the people again, to their great astonishment and to the joy of his sisters Martha and Mary.

Many of the Jews who saw the miracle believed that Jesus was the Messias, the Son of God, while others went and told the Pharisees what they had seen. The Pharisees and chief priests then took counsel together and said, What will we do? This man works so many miracles that all the people will believe on him and make him King, and then the Romans will come and take away both our place and nation.

Caiaphas the high priest said that it was better that one man should be put to death than that the whole nation perish.

This was a prophecy which Caiaphas uttered without knowing it to be a prophecy—namely, that Christ should die to save all the Jewish people who would believe on him, and not the Jews only, but those of every other people who should believe on his name.

THE SENDING OUT OF THE SEVENTY.

From this time forward the Jews took counsel together to put Jesus to death, but the Lord, knowing that his time to die had not yet come, withdrew with his disciples into a place called Ephraim.

Jesus was praying in a certain place, and when he ceased one of the disciples said to him, Lord, teach us to pray, even as John also taught his disciples. He said to them, When you pray, say:

Our Father which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Then he told his disciples to ask God for what they wanted and he would give it to them. Praying is asking. Jesus said, Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you. If a son should ask bread of his father, would he give him a stone? And if he asked for a fish, would he give him a serpent? If you then being evil know how to give good gifts to your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give good things to them that ask him? What God gives is always good, but the Holy Spirit is his best gift. Through him we obtain new hearts and become the children of God.

Besides the twelve apostles whom our Lord chose, he also selected seventy other disciples and sent them two and two before his face into every city to which he intended to go. He told them to heal the sick, and to tell the people that the Kingdom of God had come nigh unto them, and in whatever city they were not received they were to leave, saying, Even the very dust of your city we do shake off our feet as a testimony against you.

After a short time the seventy disciples returned again with joy, saying, Lord, even the devils are subject unto us through thy name. Jesus told them to rejoice not because the spirits were subject unto them, but because their names were written in heaven.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

THE GREAT FEAST — THE LOST SHEEP — THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN — THE UNJUST STEWARD — THE RICH MAN AND THE BEGGAR — THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

It was the Sabbath day, and Jesus was teaching in the synagogue. Amongst the worshippers was a woman, who, during eighteen years, was bound by a spirit of infirmity so that she could not straighten herself up. When Jesus saw her he called her and said unto her, Woman, thou art cured of thy sickness. And he laid his hands on her : and immediately she was made straight, and glorified God. It is remarkable how this woman attended religious service, although she was such a poor cripple. Many who are slightly ill often excuse themselves from public worship, and were they like this poor woman, and had to suffer pain in walking and perhaps be ill-treated by some of the multitude of people, they would not go at all to the house of God. In the synagogue Jesus met her, and, besides enjoying the benefits of worship, Christ gave her an unexpected blessing, in healing and straightening her crippled body.

The ruler of the synagogue became angry because Jesus wrought this miracle on the Sabbath day, and said to the people, There are six days in which men ought to work. If you want to be healed, come on those days, and do not be guilty of breaking the Sabbath day. Jesus answered him and said, Thou hypocrite ! does not each one of you on the Sabbath loose his ox or his ass from the stall, and lead him away to watering? And if it be right to do this on the Sabbath, ought not this woman whom Satan hath bound, lo, these eighteen years, be loosed from this trouble on the Sabbath day?

When Jesus had said these things his enemies blushed with shame, while the people rejoiced for all the glorious things which he had done. Jesus then told the people that the kingdom of God was like unto a grain of mustard-seed, which the

husbandman cast into his garden. This seed is very small, the least of all seeds, yet being put in the earth it grew and became a great tree; and the fowls of the air lodged in the branches of it. The kingdom of God as begun by Christ seemed a very small thing. Christ himself was a poor man and did not begin to establish his kingdom till he was thirty years old, and did not labor longer than three years and six months before he was crucified by his enemies.

But as from the little mustard seed comes the great tree, so large that many birds can lodge in its branches, so has the kingdom of God extended until now. Many people of all lands are found in it.

Jesus said also that the kingdom of heaven was like a little lump of leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal till the whole was leavened. The parable of the mustard-seed shows the outward and visible increase of the kingdom of Christ. The parable of the leaven shows the inward working of the kingdom of grace in the souls of men, till all sin is removed from them.

As Jesus went through the cities and villages teaching, on his way to Jerusalem, he was asked the question by one, Are there few that be saved? Jesus did not answer by telling this questioner the exact number of the saved or lost, but simply told the people that they ought to strive to please God, and so live as to be fit for heaven at length. He also told them that many would make some effort to enter in at the strait gate, but would not get in because they were not enough in earnest; that such persons would knock at the door of heaven, and ask God to open it for them, but Christ would say to them, I never knew you, and they would be cast into the place of punishment. But many also would come from the east and the west, and from the north and the south, and should sit down with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God.

Jesus went into the house of one of the chief Pharisees to eat bread on the Sabbath day. There he met a certain man who had the dropsy. Jesus asked the lawyers and Pharisees, Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath day? They did not answer him. Jesus healed the man and let him go, and then

THE GREAT FEAST.

said to the company, If an ox or an ass fall into a pit you pull him out; why should I not heal this man on the Sabbath? And they could not answer him.

Then Jesus spoke a parable to the guests who were invited with him to the Pharisee's house. He saw that the guests were choosing out the chief seats. Some of them were proud of their money, some of their learning, some of their age, some thought their family superior to any other, and some thought they were more religious than all others, but they all wanted the best places.

Jesus said to them, When you are invited to a wedding do not choose the highest place, because a more honorable man may come in, and then you may be told to give place to him, and you will be ashamed, having to take the lowest seat. But when you are bidden to a feast go and sit in the lowest place, so that when he that invited you comes he may say unto you, Friend, go up higher, and then great respect will be shown unto you. For those who exalt themselves shall be abased, while those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

Jesus also spoke to the man in whose house they were. When you make a dinner or a supper do not call your friends or brethren or rich neighbors, because they will invite you again and you will be recompensed. The great feasts were given by the Jews for show and fashion, and not from friendship or charity; and it was always expected that those who were invited should invite the others in turn.

Christ said, When you make a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, and the blind, and you will be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee, but you shall be recompensed at the resurrection of the just.

Then Jesus said to them, A certain man made a great supper and bade many, and sent his servants to tell the guests to come to the supper, for all things are now ready. And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said, I have bought a piece of land, and I must needs go and see it; I pray thee have me excused. Another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I am going to prove them; I pray thee have me excused. Another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. And the servant came back and

told his master of the excuses which those who were invited had made.

The master of the house became very angry and told hi servant to go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and to bring in the poor and the maimed, and the halt and the blind. The servant returned to his master and said,

THE LOST SHEEP.

Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. And the master said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled, for I say unto you that none of these men who were first bidden shall taste of my supper. The meaning of this parable is that God, by his servants the

prophets, and by his Son, had offered to the Jews the privileges and blessings of the gospel, but that they had refused them, and that God, because of their refusal, would offer these advantages to the Gentiles. It may also mean that very often those who are great in this world and full of riches will not accept the blessings of Christ's kingdom, while the poor often gladly accept the mercy and comfort which the gospel affords.

Jesus told the multitudes that followed him and listened to his words that if any man wanted to follow him so as to be really his disciple, he would have to love him more than his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren and sisters, yea, more than his own life. None but those who were willing to bear their cross and deny themselves, and seek to please God only, could be his disciples.

Which of you, said Christ, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, to see whether he has enough money to finish it? Lest after he has laid the foundation he may have to stop, and all that see it mock him, saying, This man began to build, and was not able to finish.

Or, what king, going to make war against another king, sitteth not down first and consulteth whether he be able with ten thousand to meet a foe that comes against him with twenty thousand. So, likewise, said Jesus, only those who forsake all that they have can be my disciples.

The publicans or tax-gatherers and the sinners drew near to hear the words of Jesus. The Pharisees and the scribes murmured against Jesus, and said, This man receiveth sinners and eateth with them. Jesus answered them in a parable, saying, What man of you having a hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, will not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after the one which is lost, till he find it? And when he has found it, he lays it upon his shoulders and goes home rejoicing. And when he gets home, he calls his friends and neighbors together, and says, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. So also shall there be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons that need no repentance.

Or, what woman having ten pieces of silver, and losing one

of them, does not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek earnestly till she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls her friends and neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. Likewise, said Jesus, there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth.

THE PRODIGAL'S RETURN.

Christ spake another parable, as follows: A certain man had two sons, and the younger said to his father, Father, give me the share of your wealth which belongs to me. And the father gave him his portion. Not many days after, the younger son took what his father had given him, and went into a far country, and there wasted his substance in riotous living. When he had spent all, there came a great famine in

that land, and he began to be in want. He felt the need of bread to eat, and he hired himself to a citizen of that country, and he sent him into his fields to feed swine. He was without food, and no man gave unto him; he was so hungry that he would gladly have eaten the husks on which the swine were fed. In the midst of his poverty and distress he said to himself, How many hired servants of my father's have more than enough, while I am here perishing with hunger! He becomes humble, and thus came to himself. Then he says, I have sinned; and then, I am no more worthy. After this he decided that he would arise and go to his father, which he immediately did. And then Jesus presents us with a description of how the father received the young returning prodigal. When he was yet a great way off, the father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. He first kissed, then clothed, then feasted him. He did not scold him nor say any unkind things to him. He was so glad to see his wandering boy at home again. The father told the servants, Bring forth quickly the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet, and bring hither the fatted calf and kill it: and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found. And they began to be merry.

The elder son was in the field, and, coming nigh to the house, he heard music and dancing, and he called one of the servants and asked what these things meant. And the servant said unto him, Your brother is here, and your father has killed the fatted calf because he has returned in safety. And the elder son, when he heard this, was angry, and would not go in; so his father came out and plead with him to enter. But he answered the father, and said, Lo, these many years have I served thee, neither have I transgressed your commandment at any time; and yet thou never gavest me a kid that I might make merry with my friends. But when this thy son came who has wasted your substance amongst wicked companions, you have killed for him the fatted calf. The father answered and said, Son, thou art always with me, and all that I have is thine. It is right that we make

merry and be glad: for this thy brother was dead, and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

The object of this parable was to show the scribes and Pharisees, who murmured against him because he received sinners and ate with them, that God would forgive any sinner who left his sins and returned to him.

THE UNJUST STEWARD.

Jesus spoke to his disciples the parable of the unjust steward: There was a certain rich man which had a steward that was unfaithful to him and wasted his goods. The rich man summoned the steward, and asked him, How is it that I hear this of thee? Give me an account of your stewardship, for you cannot be my steward any longer. When

the steward saw that he was going to be dismissed, he said, What shall I do? My lord is going to take away my stewardship, and I cannot work, because I have not been accustomed to it, and I am ashamed to beg. I have made up my mind what I shall do. I will make friends with my lord's debtors, so that, when I am discharged by my employer, they may take me into their homes. So he called the first and asked him, How much do you owe unto my lord? And the debtor said, I owe one hundred measures of oil. And the steward said, Take your bill and write upon it that you owe only fifty. The steward said unto the second. How much do you owe unto my lord? And he said, One hundred measures of wheat. The steward said, Write down that you owe only eighty. The lord commended the unjust steward, not for his dishonesty in cheating him, but he admired his shrewdness in making such provision for himself in the future, after he would be dismissed by his employer. Christ said, So are the children of this world wiser and more shrewd in their generation in making provision for the time of old age, than are the children of God in promoting their spiritual and eternal interests.

God calls us to learn a lesson from their foresight, prudence, and energy, and to engage in his service with our whole hearts. The Lord teaches us that the riches of this world belong to him, and that the men who have them are simply placed over them as stewards, and that only those who are faithful in their use of them will be entrusted with the true and eternal riches.

Christ told them that no man can serve two masters, as the unjust steward tried to do. He attempted to serve the lord who employed him, and at the same time to profit by the riches which he had dishonestly taken from his master.

We must either serve God or else we will serve ourselves. This parable was spoken by Christ as a rebuke to the Pharisees, who were great lovers of money, but is intended also to caution all others against the same sin.

Then Jesus told them the parable of the rich man and Lazarus: There was a certain rich man, who was clothed in purple and fine linen, and who lived on the choicest food

every day. His home was a splendid residence, rich carpets covering its floors and beautiful gems adorning its walls. The princely occupant rode in his elegant chariots, behind magnificent horses. It is not said that he was a very bad

THE RICH MAN AND THE BEGGAR.

man, but simply that he lived a life of ease and self-indulgence and forgetfulness of God. He did not care for the sorrows and wants of a poor man such as Lazarus, who sat at his gate and was glad to make a meal on the pieces which

were taken from his table after he had indulged his appetite. Lazarus was not only poor, but very sick with a diseased body. The dogs were his companions, and we read that they licked the poor man's sores as he sat at the gate. Perhaps he was unable even to walk to the gate, but was carried there every day by sympathizing friends. He desired to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table, but it is not stated that he received enough even of these to supply his wants.

The condition of Lazarus in this life formed a marked contrast to that of the rich man. At last the beggar's sufferings were ended, by death coming to his relief, and Lazarus was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom. There was very little display at his funeral; he filled only a pauper's grave; indeed, the Scripture makes no mention of his funeral. The palaces of the new Jerusalem, the raptures of heaven, and the enjoyment of the celestial banquet formed a marked contrast to his former sad experiences of suffering and woe.

The rich man also died and had a grand and costly funeral, for the Scripture states that he was buried. But in the future state, we are told that he lifted up his eyes, being in torments, and, as he looked up, he saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom, and he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus that he may dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented in this flame. So great was the punishment which he suffered for his sins. But Abraham said, Son, remember that you, in your lifetime, received your good things. You had the riches, pleasures, and honors of the world, while Lazarus received evil things—poverty, suffering, sickness, neglect, and hunger. But now Lazarus, who trusted in and served God, is comforted, and you, who lived a life of ease, indulgence, and forgetfulness of God, are tormented. And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, so that those who would pass from us to you cannot, neither can they pass to us who would come from you. His prayers for himself will not be heard, so he desires that Lazarus may be sent to his father's house, that he

may warn his five brethren to repent of their sins, lest they, too, should come into that place of torment. Abraham said, They have the writings of Moses and the prophets, and in them, if they read, they will find sufficient warnings, and

THE PHARISEE AND THE PUBLICAN.

from them they can learn their duty if they will. The rich man said, Nay, father Abraham, but if one shall go to them from the dead and warn them, they will repent. Abraham replied, If they will not heed the teachings of God in the

Scripture, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead. It may be that the desire of the rich man that his brethren should not come there was not because he was interested in their escaping the sufferings of the place. It may have been because when he was on earth his influence tended towards leading them to wrong-doing, and on account of this he knew that if they came to hell their presence would only increase his suffering. He would remember what his influence upon them had been, and they would tell him of it.

Jesus wanted to impress upon the minds of the disciples the necessity of much prayer, and for this reason he told them the following parable:

There was in a city a judge, who feared not God, neither regarded man. There were many judges of this kind in Eastern cities, and their favor was often bought by the rich, while the poor were left to suffer by their verdict. In the same city where the unjust judge lived was a widow who came unto him very often, beseeching him to punish one who was her enemy.

Suitors in the East, even at the present time, will seat themselves day after day at a rich man's door, till they exhaust his patience, and he will grant them their requests in order to get rid of them. The unjust judge to whom the widow applied said within himself, Though I fear not God nor regard man, yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust judge saith. And if this man, who was unjust and without mercy and compassion, was moved by the perseverance and importunity of the widow to grant her requests, will not God, who judges righteously and who is full of compassion and mercy, give unto his children what they pray for day and night, though for a while he may seem not to hear them? I tell you, he will avenge them speedily.

Jesus spake another parable unto certain ones which trusted in themselves that they were more righteous than others, whom they despised. Two men went up into the temple to pray, the one a Pharisee and the other a publican. The

Pharisee stood where he could be seen of men, and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee that I am not like other men who are unjust and unholy. I fast twice a week and give as an offering to God a tenth part of all that I get. He prayed with himself and not to God; he made no confession of his sins and showed no sign of humility, but on the contrary dwelt upon his own righteousness, and looked down with contempt upon the poor publican, who was praying at the same time. The publican, full of shame and sorrow, stood afar off, his head bowed down; he would not lift so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, to show the grief he felt within because of his sinfulness, and said, God be merciful to me, a sinner.

Jesus tells that the prayer of the publican was acceptable to God because offered in humility and self-judgment, and that he went from the temple to his house justified rather than the Pharisee. For those who are proud and think much of themselves shall be put down, while those who humble themselves shall be exalted.

CHAPTER XL.

THE CHILDREN BROUGHT TO JESUS — THE BLIND BARTIMEUS — ZACCHEUS — PARABLE OF THE POUNDS — THE MOUNT OF OLIVES — THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM — CHILDREN CRYING "HOSANNA" — THE UNFRUITFUL TREE — PARABLES OF THE HUSBHNDMEN AND THE WEDDING-FEAST — TRIBUTE MONEY — PHYLACTERIES — THE WIDOW'S MITE — PARABLE OF THE TEN VIRGINS, THE TALENTS, AND THE LAST JUDGMENT — THE FEAST OF THE PASSOVER — JUDAS BETRAYING JESUS.

Young children were brought unto Jesus that he might lay his hands upon them, and bless them. The mothers wanted to devote the little ones to the service of God, and that they might be his followers when they grew older.

The disciples did not like to see their Master interrupted in this way; they thought the children were so young that they could receive no benefit from Christ's teachings. Many

think the same way now, forgetting that children possess a simplicity of spirit and also a confiding disposition, both of which are essential in all who would be Christians. The conduct of the disciples displeased the Saviour very much, and he rebuked them, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not; for of such is the kingdom of God. Verily, I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child shall in nowise enter therein. In another place we read that Jesus took little children up in his arms and blessed them.

Jesus came into Jericho with his disciples and a great number of people. A blind man named Bartimeus, the son of Timeus, sat by the highway begging. He heard the noise of the multitude passing by and asked what it meant. They told him that Jesus of Nazareth was passing by. When he heard this, he began to cry out and say, Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me. No doubt he had heard of the wonderful skill of the Saviour in giving sight to the blind, in healing the sick, and in raising the dead, and felt that this might be his only opportunity. So he cried earnestly unto Jesus that he would have mercy on him. Many of the people tried to silence him, but he did not listen to them, and cried so much the more. Jesus stood still and told those around him to call the man. So they called the blind man, saying, Be of good comfort; rise, he calleth thee. And the blind man cast aside his garment, and rose, and came to Jesus. Our Lord asked him, What wilt thou that I should do unto thee? The blind man said, Lord, that I might receive my sight. Jesus said unto him, Go your way, because of your faith you are made whole. And immediately his sight was restored, and he followed Jesus in the way.

Jesus passed through Jericho. There was a man named Zaccheus who lived in that city. He was the chief among the publicans or tax-gatherers, and he was rich. Zaccheus had heard of Jesus, and was anxious to see him, but could not because the crowd was so great, and he was a small man. So he ran on ahead and climbed into a sycamore tree, for Jesus was to pass that way. When the Lord came to the place, he looked up and said, Zaccheus, make haste and come down; for to-day I must abide at thy house. And he made haste and came

"SUFFER LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME."

down, and received Jesus into his house joyfully. Some of them said that the Saviour was gone to be the guest of a man who was a sinner. There were many priests living in Jericho, and they thought the publicans to be sinners above all other men. Perhaps Zaccheus had heard what the people had said about Christ going to be the guest of such a man. At any rate, Zaccheus stood up before Jesus and all the people and made confession of his sins, saying, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor, and if I have taken anything from any man wrongfully I will give him back four times as much as was taken. Jesus, seeing that Zaccheus was sorry for his sins, had confessed them, and was going to put them away, accepted him and told him that his sins were forgiven, and that salvation had come to his house, for, said Jesus to the people, the Son of man is come to seek and save that which is lost.

Then Jesus spake unto the disciples the parable of the pounds, and said, A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive from the principal government royal authority. And he called his ten servants, and gave them ten pounds, and said unto them, Occupy till I come. But the citizens hated him, and sent a message after him, saying, We will not have this man to reign over us. He received the royal authority and returned. Then he called those servants to whom he had given the money, that he might find out how much each had gained by trading. The first came and said, Lord, thy pound hath gained ten pounds. The king said, as he had been faithful over a piece of gold he had shown himself to be worthy of greater things, and gave him authority over ten cities. The second servant came and said, Lord, thy pound hath gained five pounds. And he said likewise unto him, Rule thou also over five cities. And another came, saying, Lord, here is thy pound, which I have kept laid up in a napkin. I was afraid of you, because I knew you to be an exacting man ; you take up what you do not lay down, and reap what you do not sow. And the Lord said, I will judge you according to your own opinions. You knew that I was exacting, taking up what I laid not down, and reaping what I did not sow. You should have put my money in the bank, so that when I came I would receive my own with usury or interest. And he told them which stood by to take the

THE ENTRY INTO JERUSALEM.

pound from him and give it to the one that had ten pounds. Then Jesus told them that unto every one who made use of what was given him, more should be handed to him; but from him who did not use what he had received would be taken away even that which he had received.

Jesus came to Bethphage and to Bethany, both of which

THE MOUNT OF OLIVES.

towns were near to the Mount of Olives. And he said unto two of his disciples, Go ye into the village which is opposite, and there you will find an ass tied with her colt on which man has never sat; loose him and bring him unto me. And if any man say unto you, Why do you loose him? Say unto them, Because the Lord hath need of him. And they

JESUS WEEPING OVER JERUSALEM.

went and found the colt, as Jesus had said; and as they were loosing him, the owners said, Why loose ye the colt? The disciples said, The Lord hath need of him; and they brought him to Jesus, and put their garments upon the colt, and Jesus sat upon him, and rode towards the city.

The prophet Zechariah had prophesied, Rejoice, O daughter of Jerusalem: behold, thy King cometh unto thee: he is just, and having salvation; lowly, and riding upon an ass, and upon a colt, the foal of an ass.

The road from Bethany was crowded with pilgrims who were going towards Jerusalem, and a very great multitude spread their garments in the way; others cut down branches from the trees and strewed them in the way. There were many who had beheld with wonder the miracles of Jesus and the whole multitude of the disciples amongst them. And when he came to the descent of the Mount of Olives the whole multitude of the disciples began to rejoice and praise God with a loud voice for all the mighty works which they had seen, and they said, Blessed be the King that cometh in the name of the Lord; Hosanna in the highest! Some of the Pharisees said unto Jesus, Master, rebuke thy disciples. And he answered and said unto them, I tell you, that if these should hold their peace, the stones would immediately cry out. While all the multitudes were rejoicing, Jesus began to weep as he came near the city, and he said, If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong to thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes; thine enemies shall come and shall not leave in thee one stone upon another, because thou knewest not the day when spiritual privileges and honor were offered unto thee.

It being about the time of the Feast of the Passover, multitudes were in Jerusalem, and many of the Jews said, Do you think he will come to the feast? And the chief priests had given commandment that if any man knew where Jesus was he should tell them, that they might seize him and put him to death. They were incensed against him and against Lazarus also; and because of his being raised from the dead many of the Jews had believed on Jesus.

And the chief priests spake also of putting Lazarus to death.

The anger of the chief priests and their determination to put Jesus to death did not, however, prevent Jesus from entering the city. And when he came in the whole city was moved,

CHILDREN IN THE TEMPLE CRYING, " HOSANNA TO THE SON OF DAVID."

saying, Who is this? And the multitude said, This is Jesus the prophet of Nazareth of Galilee. And Jesus went into the temple of God and cleansed it a second time by casting out all those that sold and bought in it, as he had done

once before at the beginning of his ministry, and he said unto them, It is written, My House shall be called the house of prayer, but ye have made it a den of thieves.

As he taught in the temple, the blind and the lame were brought to him, and he healed them. But when the chief priests and scribes saw the wonderful things that he did, and heard the children in the temple crying and saying, Hosanna to the Son of David, they were greatly displeased, and said, Do you hear what they say? Should a man receive such praise? Jesus said unto them, Yea, have ye never read, Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise? And Jesus left them and went out of the city, and came to Bethany and lodged there. In the morning he returned to the city, and on the way he was hungry. Seeing a fig tree by the wayside, he came to it and found nothing on it but leaves. The fruit of the fig tree comes before the leaves, and good trees bear two crops. Jesus, seeing the leaves, expected fruit also, but was disappointed. And he said unto the fig tree, Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward forever, and immediately the fig tree withered away.

Next day the disciples saw that the fig tree was dried up from the roots, and they wondered, and said, How soon is the fig tree withered away! Jesus told them, if they had faith and did not doubt, they should not only be able to do what he had done unto the fig tree, but much greater works also.

This fig tree represents the Jewish people, who were the chosen nation of God, and who made professions of fidelity to him. These professions are well represented by the green leaves of the tree. The leaves also represented much of the elaborate ritual of the Jewish Church. But when Christ came looking for the fruit of real devotion and love to God, he did not find it. Hence, because the Jews had not embraced their privileges, God had determined that the blessings of the gospel should be taken from them and given to the Gentiles, who would bring forth its fruits.

When Christ came to Jerusalem from Bethany he went into the temple, and the chief priests and the elders of the people came and said unto him, Who gave you authority to do these things? They had often asked him this question before. Jesus

answered them and said, I will ask you one question, and if you answer it, then I will tell you by what authority I do

THE UNFRUITFUL TREE.

these things. Was the baptism of John from Heaven or was it of men?

The priests and elders then reasoned amongst themselves, and said, If we say it was from Heaven, he will say, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, It was of men,

we will be afraid of the people, for they all say that John was a prophet. And they answered Jesus and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things. Christ tried by all of his questions to get them to see that he was the Son of God, that they might enjoy the blessings of his kingdom. To convince them of this he also told them this parable:

A certain man had two sons, and he came to the first and said, Son, go work to-day in my vineyard. He said plainly, I will not, but after a while he repented and went.

Then he came to the second son, and asked him to go. He said, I will go, sir, but he went not. Jesus asked them, Which of the two, do you think, did the will of his father? They said, The first. Jesus said to them, I tell you truly that the publicans and sinners will go into the kingdom of God before you.

This was the same as telling them that by their connection with the temple and Jewish services they said to God that they would obey him, but they did not. Then Jesus spake another parable and said:

There was a man who planted a vineyard, and set a hedge or wall around it, and dug a pit for a wine-press, where the grapes could be trodden out.

And he built a tower for the watchman who was to guard the place, and when all was finished he rented the vineyard to husbandmen and went away to another country.

It was a common arrangement in Eastern countries for husbandmen to pay their rent out of the fruit. When the time of fruit drew near, the owner of the vineyard sent his servants to the husbandmen, that he might receive his share. And the husbandmen took his servants, and beat one, and killed another, and stoned another.

Afterwards he sent more servants, and the husbandmen treated them in the same manner. Last of all he sent his son, saying, Surely they will have reverence for my son. But when the husbandmen saw the son, they said among themselves, This is the heir: come, let us kill him, and all of his inheritance will be ours. And they took him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

Then Jesus asked the chief priests and elders, When the lord of the vineyard cometh, what shall he do to those husbandmen? They answered, He will destroy the wicked wretches, and will let out the vineyard to other husbandmen, who will give him the fruits in their season.

By the owner of the vineyard Jesus meant God; by the vineyard itself, the kingdom of God; the wicked husbandmen were the Jews; the servants were the prophets, who foretold the coming of the Saviour, and who were cruelly treated by the Jews, to whom they were sent; and the son meant Jesus himself. Therefore, said Jesus, I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof.

When the chief priests and Pharisees heard this parable, and knew that he had spoken it against them, they would have seized him at once, but they were afraid of the people, who believed him to be a prophet.

The next parable which Jesus told them was that of the marriage of the king's son. The king made for his son a marriage-feast, and when all was ready he sent out his servants to call those who were invited to the feast. But they would not come. Then he sent out other servants, saying, Tell those who have been invited that I have prepared my dinner: my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready; come, then, to the marriage-feast.

But they made light of the invitation, and went about their own business, one to his farm and another to his merchandise, and the rest fell upon his servants and treated them shamefully and slew them. When the king heard of their conduct, he was very angry, and sent his armies and destroyed those murderers and burned up their city. Then said he to his servants, The wedding is ready, but those who were invited were not worthy to come. Go ye therefore into the streets of the city, and as many as ye shall find, bid to the marriage-feast. So the servants went out and gathered all sorts of people, bad as well as good, and brought them in.

But when the king came in to look upon the guests, he saw there a man who had not on a wedding garment. And he said to him, Friend, how camest thou in here without a wed-

ding garment? The man was silent, for he had no excuse to make. Then said the king, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into outer darkness, that he may be punished for his sins.

In this parable the king represents God; the son for whom

THE WEDDING GARMENT.

the feast was given means Jesus; those first invited were the Jews; and those who were brought in from the streets were Gentiles or other nations that believed in Jesus; the wedding garment means the Lord, as the believer's righteousness.

The Pharisees took counsel together how they might entangle Jesus in his conversation, and they sent unto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying, Master, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God in truth, and that thou dost not regard the person of men; tell us, therefore, is it lawful to give tribute unto Cæsar or not? Jesus saw the wicked motive they had in asking him this question and said, Why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites? Show me the tribute money. And they brought him a penny, and he said

GIVE TO CÆSAR THAT WHICH IS CÆSAR'S.

unto them, Whose is this image and superscription? They say unto him, Cæsar's. Then said Jesus unto them, Render, therefore, unto Cæsar the things which are Cæsar's, and unto God the things that are God's.

When they heard these words they marvelled and left him. The same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came unto him and told him of a woman who had been seven times married, and asked him whose wife of the seven she should be, in the resurrection.

Jesus answered them, and said, Ye do err, and know neither

the Scriptures nor the power of God. For in the resurrection they do not marry, but are as the angels of God in heaven.

Then he showed them that they should believe in the resurrection of the soul and body, because God had said to Moses, years after Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were dead, I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob; and told them that God was not the God of the dead, but of the living, meaning that Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were living in the presence of God, at the very moment when he spoke these words to Moses.

When the people heard the Lord speak these words they were astonished at the wisdom of his doctrine. The Pharisees, hearing that he had put the Sadducees to silence, gathered together, and one of them, who was a lawyer, asked him a question, tempting him, hoping to find something in his answer as an accusation against him. His question was, Master, which is the great commandment in the law? Jesus said, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets. Jesus meant that all the commandments were bound up in these two, for if we love our fellow-men we will do them no wrong. These two commandments contain all that the Scriptures teach us.

The Pharisees asked Jesus many questions, and our Lord now asks them a question. What think ye of Christ? said he to the proud religionists. They said, He is the Son of David. Jesus said, How then does David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David call Christ Lord, how is he his son? The Pharisees were not able to understand how Christ, being God, could, at the same time, be David's Lord, while, being a man, he could also be David's son or descended from him. None of the Pharisees could after this answer him a word, neither did they dare to ask him any more questions.

Jesus said to the multitude and to his disciples, The scribes and the Pharisees sit in Moses' seat, that is, they assume to

teach as Moses did; whatever they tell you to do, if it be contained in the Scriptures, do it, but do not follow their example because they have added commandments which they do not keep themselves and expect others to keep them. All their works are done to be seen of men. They make broad their phylacteries and enlarge the borders of their garments. A phylactery was a strip of parchment on which were written passages from the law. This strip was put in a case, and worn on the left arm or on the forehead. The common people wore these only at prayer, while the Pharisees wore them

PHYLACTERIES.

constantly, and made them very large so that they could be seen at a great distance, and to indicate that they were engaged in prayer or in holy meditation. Though outwardly religious, the Pharisees had wicked hearts; they grew rich by taking more money than they had any right to; they were proud, and their pride led them to choose the chief seats in the synagogues and the highest places at feasts. They made long prayers that the people might see them and regard them as pious. Yet at the same time they were unjust to others, taking what did not belong to them. While holding them-

selves up as teachers of the law, and at the same time doing such wicked things, they, by their bad example, led many away from the right path.

For all of these things Jesus said of them that they should receive the greater condemnation and punishment. The extent of their guilt is seen from Christ having pronounced a woe upon them no less than eight times because of their mode of life and their treatment of others.

After pronouncing these terrible woes upon the Pharisees, Jesus remained a while in the temple, and, sitting opposite the treasury, he watched the people casting in their money. The treasury was a box into which the money given to buy sacrifices was put. The rich put in a great deal, and amongst the rich came a poor widow, who put in two mites, which was less than half a cent. No doubt the rich looked upon her offering with scorn, but Jesus called unto his disciples and said unto them, This poor widow has cast more into the treasury than all the rest; for they were rich, and though they cast in much they did not miss it, but she, though poor and in want, gave all that she had, and left nothing for herself to live upon.

The worth of a gift is determined by what it costs the giver, and the money the poor widow gave counted as more to God than all that any of the rich men had given.

As Jesus went out of the temple one of his disciples called his attention to its magnificence, and said, Master, see what stones and what buildings are here. Herod had built the temple and the houses in which the priests lived of immense blocks of white marble, some of them being more than seventy feet long, ten feet wide, and eight feet high.

Jesus answering said, Dost thou see these great buildings? Truly I say unto thee there shall not be left one stone upon another; they shall all be thrown down. Jesus knew that God would destroy the city and punish the people for their sins. His disciples asked him when this was to take place, and when the end of the world was to come. Jesus told them to be always ready, for they could not tell the day nor the hour when this would take place. As it was in the days of Noah, when the people were eating and drinking, marry-

ing and giving in marriage, and knew not till the flood came and swept them all away, so would it be at the coming of God to judge the world. Men should be like a faithful and wise servant whom his master had placed as ruler of his household, and whom he expects to find faithful in the discharge of his duties when he returns. Then the master shall be pleased with him, and will show him favor. But if the servant shall become evil and shall say in his heart, My mas-

THE WIDOW'S MITE.

ter delays in coming, and then, because of the delay, he begins to beat his fellow-servants and to eat and drink with the drunken, the master of that servant will come in a day when he is not looking for him, and in an hour when he is not expected, and shall cut him off in judgment and appoint him his place amongst sinners to suffer punishment.

Christ told his disciples three parables, one after another, to illustrate the solemn truths which he had tried to impress upon their minds. He said that the kingdom of heaven was

like unto ten virgins who went out to meet the bridegroom. In Judea, when a man married, he brought his bride home in the night to his own house, where a feast was prepared, to which all the friends and neighbors were invited. A band of young women went out to meet the bridegroom, each one with a lamp in her hand.

A virgin is a young unmarried woman, and these ten virgins in the parable went out to meet the bridegroom. Five of them were wise and five of them were foolish, for the wise took oil with them to keep their lamps burning; but the foolish virgins took no oil to fill their lamps. The bridegroom did not come at the hour they expected him, and they all fell asleep.

At midnight a cry was heard, Behold the bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him. Then the wise virgins arose and trimmed the wicks of their lamps and poured fresh oil therein. And the foolish said to them, Give us of your oil, for our lamps are going out. But the wise answered, There will not be enough for us and you; go ye therefore to those that sell and buy some for yourselves. While they were gone to buy the oil, the bridegroom came, and those that were ready went with him to the marriage-feast and the door was shut.

Afterward came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to us. But he answered and said, I know you not, and would not let them in.

The explanation of this parable is as follows: The bridegroom is Jesus; the wise and foolish virgins are all those who call themselves his disciples; the lamps mean our hearts, which must be kept pure, and filled with the oil of the Holy Spirit, so that we may be bright and shining lights. We must be pure and good all the time, so that should we be called away suddenly in the night, we should feel confident that the door of heaven will not be closed against us.

Oil was easily obtained, and the foolish virgins might have had enough of it to have their lamps to burn brightly. Divine grace is free to all, and for each there is an abundant supply.

The next parable which Christ spake is that of the talents.

It is very similar to the parable of the pounds, which was referred to previously. But the parable of the pounds was spoken to the multitudes, while that of the talents was spoken to the disciples alone. A talent is a much larger sum than a pound, and it is evident that much greater abilities are en-

THE FOOLISH VIRGINS.

trusted to those who are called as were the apostles to high positions in the Church than to other followers of Christ who may be engaged in secular pursuits. Unto one servant the rich man gave five talents, to another two, and to another one. He divided his money amongst them that they might

trade and gain more for him while he was gone. He gave to each of them according to his ability. Then the servant who had received five talents traded with them and gained five talents more. He who received two talents did the same and earned two more. But he that received but one went and dug a hole in the earth and hid his lord's money.

Now after a long time the master came back and called the servants to give an account of what they had done. He who had received the five talents came to him, saying, Master, thou didst give me five talents; behold, I have added to them five talents more. His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou wast faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things, and you shall remain with me. He also who had received the two talents came and said, Master, thou gavest me two talents, and I have earned two talents more. His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will set thee over many things, and thou also shalt dwell in my house. Then he who had received one talent came and said, Master, I knew thee that thou wert a hard and selfish man, claiming more than your just dues, and I was afraid that I might not earn enough with your money, and that you would punish me for it. Therefore I hid the talent in the earth, so that it could not be lost or stolen, and here it is; I return it to thee, for it is thine. The master answered, Thou wicked and slothful servant, if that was the opinion you had of me you ought to have so used the money I gave you as to have gained interest upon it, and given me both the money and the interest. Then he said to his other servants, Take from him the one talent and give it to him who has ten talents. For unto every one that hath shall be given, and he shall have abundance; but from him that hath not, shall be taken away even that which he hath.

In this parable the master represents Christ, who has left for heaven, but will return to judge the world. The servants mean those whom he has left to work in his vineyard in the world. The talents are the gifts which God has given us.

Some have fine minds and can preach and teach, while others cannot, and some of those who preach and teach can

do them much better than others. Others have riches which they can put to a good use, building churches, and hospitals, and taking care of the poor; some have many gifts, while

THE TALENTS.

others have but few; yet every one has at least one talent which he can use in his Master's service; and when Jesus comes again he will reward those who have made a good use of their talents, and will punish those who have neglected his

commands, and made the smallness of their gifts an excuse for not engaging in his service.

Christ gave next a description of the scenes which will take place at the final judgment; and this description is sometimes called the parable of the last judgment. But it cannot be the last judgment, since all the persons gathered before Christ are persons who had never died, but were living on the earth at the time of the appearance of the Son of man—the Lord Jesus himself, when he comes in his glory, attended by all his holy angels. The last judgment is that which takes place before the Great White Throne mentioned in the twentieth chapter of Revelation. The judgment of the nations is that mentioned in the twenty-fifth chapter of St. Matthew. At this judgment shall be gathered before the Son of man all nations, and he shall separate the righteous from the wicked, as a shepherd divides the sheep from the goats. And he will set the sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left. Then he will say to those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for when I was hungry, ye gave me food; when I was thirsty, ye gave me drink; when I was a stranger, ye took me in into your homes; when I was naked, ye clothed me; when I was sick and in prison, ye visited me. Then the righteous will say, When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee home? or naked, and clothed thee? or sick or in prison, and visited thee? And Jesus will answer them, Inasmuch as you did it unto the least of my brethren, you did it unto me. Then he shall say to those on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, which was prepared for the devil and his evil spirits; for I was hungry, and ye gave me no meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave me no drink; I was a stranger, and ye took me not into your homes; naked, and ye clothed me not; sick and in prison, and ye visited me not. Then shall they also answer, Lord, when saw we thee hungry, or athirst, or a stranger, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not help thee? And he shall answer them, Inasmuch as you did it not to the very least of my brethren ye did it not unto me. And these shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.

When Christ had finished this description of the judgment, he said to his disciples, After two days will be the Feast of the Passover, and then the Son of man—meaning himself—will be betrayed, to be crucified by his enemies. The chief priests, the scribes, and the elders of the people assembled together in the palace of Caiaphas the high priest to consult how by some cunning trick they might take Jesus and then put him to death. But they agreed that they must not attempt to do this during the Feast of the Passover, lest it should cause a disturbance amongst the people. Multitudes flocked to Jerusalem to attend the feast, and amongst them were many who loved Jesus because of his character, his teachings, and his great miracles, and the priests and scribes were afraid of them.

Jesus came from the house of Zaccheus to Bethany, and there they made him a supper in the house of Simon, who had been a leper, but had been cured of his leprosy, probably by Jesus, and after his cure the name Simon the leper still clung to him.

Here at Bethany lived Martha and Mary and their brother Lazarus, all dear friends of our Lord. Martha served at the supper, and Lazarus, whom he had raised from the dead, sat at the table with him.

People in the East did not sit at meals as we do, but reclined on long couches, which were nearly as high as the table, and were placed all around, while the inside was open and free, so that those who waited on the table could serve the guests that leaned on their left arms, and helped themselves with their right hands.

Spoons, knives, and forks were unknown. Each guest dipped a thin wafer, like a piece of bread, into the dish, and folding it up carried the food to the mouth.

The two persons nearest each other commonly ate from the same dish. While the guests reclined in this way, their feet were stretched out away from the table, and at the houses of the wealthy, servants were employed to scatter pleasant perfumes over the head and person of each guest.

Mary, the sister of Martha, took a pound of ointment, made of spikenard, which was very costly, worth as much as a

laboring man could earn in a whole year. With this she anointed the head and feet of Jesus, and then wiped them with the hairs of her head. The house was filled with the sweet odor of the precious ointment.

Judas Iscariot, one of his disciples, he that was about to betray him, said, Why was not this ointment sold for three hundred pence, and the money given to the poor? This he said, not because he cared for the poor, but because he was a thief, and carried the bag or box in which the money was kept, and wanted as much money as possible put into it, so that he could use it for his own purposes.

Jesus said, Let her alone; why do you trouble her? She has wrought a good work on me, against the day of my burying has she done this. For ye have the poor always with you, but ye will not have me always. And Jesus told them that wherever the gospel was preached over the whole world, this thing that Mary had done should be spoken of to keep her in remembrance. Judas went from this remarkable scene at Bethany to the chief priests to make a bargain with them for the betrayal of his Master. He was disappointed in not getting the price of the ointment into the bag, and hence into his own hands; and also, perhaps, because Jesus had just spoken again of his burial, showing that there was no prospect of his establishing an earthly kingdom, or of Judas attaining to wealth in this way. He asked the chief priests what they were willing to give if he would betray him to them.

We are not told how much strife there was in the making of the bargain, how much less the chief priests wanted to give, and how much more Judas wanted to get; but the price agreed upon was thirty pieces of silver (about nineteen dollars). This was the price paid for a slave. And from that time he watched Jesus closely, that he might find an opportunity to betray him to his enemies.

JUDAS BETRAYING JESUS

CHAPTER XLI.

THE LAST SUPPER—WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET—LORD, IS IT I?—PARABLE OF THE VINE—IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE—JUDAS' KISS—THE ARREST OF JESUS.

On the first of the Feast of the Unleavened Bread, or, as it was also called, the Feast of the Passover, the disciples came to Jesus and said, Where shall we prepare for thee to eat the Passover? At this feast each man took a lamb to the temple and presented it as a sacrifice before the altar. The offerer then took home all of the lamb except the fat, and roasted it with fire, and he and his family ate it during the night. While eating it they all had their staves in their hands and their shoes on their feet. The fat of the lamb the priests burned upon the altar before the Lord.

Jesus was going to keep the Passover with his disciples, and told Peter and John to go and make ready the Passover, that they might eat. They said to him, Where shall we do this? Jesus answered, When you enter the city, there shall meet you a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him into the house where he goes, and say to the owner of the house, The Master wants you to show us the room where he shall eat the Passover with his disciples. And he will show you a large upper room furnished: there make ready. So they went into the city and found the man as Jesus had said, and he showed them the room, and there they made ready the Passover.

In the evening Jesus sat down with his disciples at the table. And he said to them, I have heartily desired to eat this Passover with you before I suffer, for I say unto you that I will not any more eat thereof until I have been offered up for the sin of the world.

Still clinging to the idea that Christ would establish a temporal kingdom, they began to dispute among themselves as to

THE LAST SUPPER.

which of them should be the greatest personage in the kingdom, next to our Lord himself. Jesus said to them, The rulers of the Gentiles lorded it over those who are beneath them in rank. But it shall not be so with you, for whosoever wishes to be the greatest among you, let him be the most humble; and whoever would be first, let him be as a servant to the rest.

Then Jesus asked them, Which is the greater, he that sits at meat, or the one who waits on him while he eats? I am in the midst of you as a servant. After saying this, he rose from the table, laid off his outer garments, and took a towel and fastened it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin, and began to wash the feet of the disciples and wipe them with the towel. When he came to Peter, Peter said, Lord, dost thou wash my feet? Jesus said, Why I do so, you know not now, but you shall know hereafter. Peter said, Thou shalt never wash my feet. Jesus answered, If I wash thee not, thou hast no part with me. You cannot do my work nor share in my glory. Then Peter said, Lord, not my feet only, but also my hands and my head. When Jesus had washed his disciples' feet, and put on the garments he had taken off, he sat down again at the table, and said to them, Do you know what I have done to you? Ye call me Master and Lord, and ye say well; for so I am. If I, then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. I have given you an example that ye should do as I have done to you. For the servant is not greater than his lord, nor he that is sent greater than he that sent him.

While they were at the table, Jesus said to them, Verily, I say unto you, one of you which eateth with me shall betray me. Then the disciples began to be sorrowful, and say unto Jesus, one by one, Is it I? As they reclined at the table, the disciple whom Jesus loved lay with his head close on Jesus' bosom. Peter made a sign to him, to ask Jesus which of them it was he referred to. Then John, who was leaning on his breast, said, Lord, who is it? Jesus answered, It is the one to whom I shall give the bread when I have dipped it. And when he had dipped in the dish he gave it to Judas.

LORD, IS IT I?

After he had taken the morsel from Jesus, Satan entered into him.

Jesus knew that under the power of the tempter Judas had made up his mind to betray him, hence he said to him, What you intend to do do quickly. But no man at the table knew what Jesus meant by these words. Some of them thought because Judas carried the purse that Jesus said unto him, Buy what we need as we go to the feast, or had told

WASHING THE DISCIPLES' FEET.

him to give something to the poor. Then Judas went out of the house, and it was night. When the traitor had left the Master told the rest of the disciples that he would be with them only a little while, and where he was going they could not go then. And he gave them a new commandment, namely, that they should love one another, as he had loved them, and told them that if they did so all men would know that they were his disciples.

Jesus then told them that they would all forsake him, because it was written that when the Shepherd was smitten

the sheep would be scattered abroad. Peter felt very confident that he at least would remain with his Master, affirming that, though all men should be offended and leave him, yet would not he. Jesus said, Peter, before the cock crow this night you will deny me three times. But Peter said the more earnestly, If I should die with you I will not deny you in any wise, and so said all the disciples.

As they sat at the table Jesus took bread and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. By this he meant that the bread was like his body, which was to be broken on the cross, and as bread nourishes our bodies and gives us strength, so will Christ feed our souls, and make them grow in strength and vigor.

Then Jesus took a cup, in which was wine, and gave thanks to God, and gave it to his disciples, and said, Drink ye all of it; for this is my blood, which is shed for many for the forgiveness of sins. The blood is the life.

And Jesus meant that the wine poured out represented his blood, which was shed on the cross, and by which we are saved from our sins.

And he told them to meet together after his death to eat the bread and drink the wine in remembrance of him.

This ordinance is still observed by all true believers, and when they celebrate this ordinance they are led to think that all their strength to do right is derived from him. Love fills their heart for each other and for the Saviour, to whom they owe so much, and they pray for strength to keep from sin and to be more like their Lord.

The disciples no doubt listened with great interest to all that Christ said to them, but they were sad and grieved that he was going to leave them. He told them that it was necessary for him to go away, for if he did not the Holy Spirit could not come; but if he left and went to heaven he would send him. And when he came he would be their comforter. He would also bring the words that Jesus had spoken to their remembrance and show them a deeper meaning in them than they had ever seen before.

Jesus also told them that in his Father's house there were many mansions, and that he was going to prepare a place for

them, and that after a time he would return and take them to a place above where they would be with him forever; and all these things would be done for them provided they would love him and keep his commandments. Then he told them the beautiful parable of the vine. He said he was the vine, and they were branches growing out of the vine. The branch cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, and neither could they bring forth spiritual fruit except they would abide in Christ. Our Lord meant that as the vine gave life and strength to the branches, so would he give life and strength to his disciples and help them to bring forth much fruit.

He told them that his Father would use the pruning-knife on the good branches, taking off leaves and shoots, when there were too many of them; and this would make the vine more fruitful. The branches which bare no fruit would be cut down and cast into the fire. If the disciples wanted to bring forth fruit—that is, to do all the good works which he expected them to do—they must be as intimately united to Christ as is the branch to the vine. He told them that no man had greater love than that which led him to lay down his life for his friends, and that they were his friends while they did what he told them. He said to them, You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you that you should bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatsoever you shall ask the Father in my name he may give it you. As the Father had sent him so he had sent them, and they were to take his place in the world.

He told them that people would not love them for this, but would persecute them, and put them to death, thinking they were doing God service. Now, he said, you will have sorrow because I leave you, but after I have risen from the grave I will see you again, and then your sorrow will be turned into joy.

He told them whenever they prayed to God for any blessing to ask for it in his name. They had never done this before, but now they were to feel that for Jesus' sake God would hear and answer their prayers and receive them as his children.

Then Jesus lifted up his eyes to heaven and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify me, that I may also glorify thee. And he prayed for his disciples and all those who should believe in him because of the gospel the disciples would preach. He prayed that they might be kept from sin and that they might love one another, and he desired that all his disciples might be with him in heaven, and see the glory with which he was crowned by his loving Father.

Then Jesus and his disciples sang a hymn, after which they left the house where they had eaten the Passover, and went to the Mount of Olives, which was nigh to Jerusalem.

When they came to a garden called Gethsemane, Jesus said to his disciples, Sit ye here while I go and pray yonder; and going some distance from them, he knelt under the dark olive trees and prayed. As a man he naturally dreaded the awful sufferings he was about to pass through, the greatest of which was being forsaken by God where he was made sin and a curse on the cross for sinners. His prayer in the garden was, Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not my will, but Thine be done. He was in great agony, and sweat as it were great drops of blood, which fell on the ground.

His sufferings were so great that probably he could not have endured them had not an angel from heaven strengthened him. Coming back to the disciples he found them sleeping, and said to them, Could ye not watch with me for one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation. The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak. Then Jesus returned and prayed the second time, saying, O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me except I drink, thy will be done. And he came and found the disciples asleep. And leaving them the third time he prayed, saying the same words. He came again to his disciples and said, Rise, let us be going; behold, he is at hand that will betray me. Judas had been watching for Jesus, and when he saw him leave the city knew that he was going to the garden of Gethsemane, so he went to the chief priests and scribes and told them where Jesus was, and how easy it would be for them to take him.

They gave Judas a band of soldiers to go with him, and there went also a great crowd of people with swords and staves. Judas told the officers that were with him the way in which he would point out Jesus to them, namely, that he should kiss him. So when he came to the spot where Jesus was he said, Hail Master! and kissed him. And Jesus said unto Judas, Friend, wherefore art thou come? Betrayest

IN THE GARDEN OF GETHSEMANE.

thou the Son of man with a kiss? Jesus said unto the company that was with Judas, Whom seek ye? They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus said unto them, I am he, and as soon as he had said this, they went backward and fell to the ground.

Peter had a sword, and he drew it, and smote the servant of the high priest, and cut off his right ear. Then said Jesus

unto Peter, Put thy sword into the sheath. Shall I not drink of the cup which my Father hath given me to drink of? Could I not now pray to my Father and he should send thousands of angels to fight for me, but how then could the Scripture be fulfilled? And Jesus touched the servant's ear, which Peter had wounded with his sword, and healed it.

THE ARREST.

And he said to the multitude, Have you come against me with swords and staves as if I were a thief? When I sat daily in the temple teaching, you might have taken me, but you did not. This is the hour that best suits your deed of darkness. Then the eleven disciples who had declared that they would never leave their Master, being now in great fear of their lives, turned from him and fled.

CHAPTER XLII.

JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS—PETER DENIES JESUS—THE CONDEMNATION — BARABBAS — PILATE — JESUS SCOURGED — CROWNED WITH THORNS—"BEHOLD THE MAN"—JESUS CARRIES THE CROSS—CALVARY—THE CRUCIFIXION.

THE Roman soldiers, having taken Jesus, led him before Caiaphas, who was the high priest that year. Peter followed

JESUS BEFORE CAIAPHAS.

the crowd afar off, and came into the court-yard of the palace, and he sat with the servants and warmed himself. He loved his Master, yet he was afraid, and hoped he could be

present at the trial without being known ; but a certain maid looked earnestly at him, and said, This man was also with him. Peter replied that he knew him not, and went out into the porch, and the cock crew. A maid saw him again and said to those that were standing by, This is one of them. Then Peter denied it again and said he did not know the man.

PETER DENYING JESUS.

One of the servants of the high priest, a relation to the man whose ear Peter cut off, said to him, Did I not see you in the garden with him? Peter denied the third time, and immediately the cock crew. And the Lord turned and looked on Peter, and he remembered the word of the Lord how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow twice thou shalt deny me three times ; and Peter went out and wept bitterly.

When Christ appeared before the high priest, the latter questioned him concerning his disciples and his doctrines. Jesus said his doctrines were well known, because he had taught openly in the temple. He told the high priest to ask those who had listened as to what he had taught. When he had said this, one of the officers who stood by struck Jesus with the palm of his hand and said, Answerest thou the high

PETER REPENTS.

priest so? Jesus said, If I have spoken evil, tell what the evil is, but if well, why do you smite me?

The chief court of the Jews before which they tried those who had been found guilty of any crime was held in a room near the temple. It was the supreme court of council and was composed of seventy-one members. These men were the judges or rulers of the Jews, and had to decide in what way the persons were to be punished that were brought before them. But if they wanted to put any one to death they had

to obtain permission of the Roman governor, for the Jews themselves were not allowed to put any one to death.

In the morning Jesus was brought before the council, and the chief priests, elders, and scribes sought to find false witnesses to speak against Jesus that they might find some excuse for putting him to death. At last came two false witnesses, saying, This man said, I am able to destroy the

THE CONDEMNATION.

temple of God and to build it in three days. Jesus made no reply. Then the high priest stood up and said, Answerest thou nothing? Is what has been said against thee true or false? Jesus was silent. The high priest said, I command thee by the name of the living God to tell us whether thou be the Christ, the son of God. Jesus saith unto him, Thou hast said. Nevertheless, I say unto you, hereafter shall ye see

the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven. Then the high priest rent his clothes, saying, What further need have we of witnesses? You have heard the blasphemy; what is your verdict?

They answered, He is guilty of death. Then they did spit in his face, and mock him, and when they had blindfolded him they struck him with the palms of their hands, saying, Tell us who it is that struck thee. Then they bound him and led him to Pontius Pilate, the Roman governor. And they all began to accuse him, saying, We found this man teaching false notions to our people, forbidding them to pay tribute to Cæsar, and saying that he himself was Christ, a king.

Pilate asked him, Art thou the king of the Jews? Jesus said, I am; but my kingdom is not of this world. If it were, then would my servants fight to deliver me from the Jews.

Pilate told the chief priests and the multitudes, I find no fault in this man. The Jews became greatly excited, and said, He stirreth up the people, preaching throughout all Judea, from Galilee even unto Jerusalem.

When Pilate heard them speak of Galilee he asked whether Jesus was a Galilean. When he heard that he was, he sent him to Herod, who was ruler of Galilee, and who was in Jerusalem at this time, attending the feast of the Passover. Herod was very glad when he saw Jesus, for he wanted to witness one of his miracles. He asked him many questions, but Jesus made no answer.

And the chief priests and scribes accused him in the presence of Herod. Then Herod and his soldiers mocked him, and put a gorgeous robe upon him, and sent him back to Pilate. The reason he put the purple robe on him was because he had said that he was a king. Kings wore purple. Pilate summoned the chief priests, and the rulers of the people, and said unto them, Ye have brought this man unto me as one that perverts the people, but I have not found him guilty of such things, nor does Herod. I sent you to him, and no charge worthy of death has been proved against him. I will therefore chastise and release him. They said, Not this man, but Barabbas. Now Barabbas was a robber. Pilate said, What

evil hath he done? I have found no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastise him and let him go.

But they cried the more earnestly, Crucify him! crucify him!

When Pilate saw that he could not persuade them to let

THE WHIPPING-POST.

the Holy One go, he took water and washed his hands, saying, I am not to blame for the death of this righteous man.

Then the Jews said, Let the blame be on us and on our children.

Pilate was none the less guilty of Christ's death because he washed his hands. He knew that the accused had done

no wrong, yet he was afraid if he offended the Jews they would make a complaint against him and he would lose his position as governor.

Crucifixion was a most cruel and disgraceful punishment. The Romans before they crucified a man scourged him most terribly. The entire body was bared and the lashes given without number. The whips were leather thongs, with lead or bones fastened to them. The prisoner was bound to a post, so that he would have to bend over and keep the skin

JESUS CROWNED WITH THORNS.

of the back tightly stretched. The whips cut through the flesh, and the poor victims frequently fainted and sometimes died.

Pilate therefore took Jesus and scourged him, and afterwards delivered him up to the soldiers who were to guard him. The soldiers plaited a crown of thorns and put it upon his head, and, taking off his own garments, they put on him a scarlet robe, and for a mock sceptre they put a reed or stick in his right hand. Then they bowed down before him and

made sport of him, saying, Hail, King of the Jews! and they spat on him, and struck him with their hands.

Pilate still hoped they would let him go, and brought the Holy One before them, saying, Behold, I bring him out to you that ye may know that I find no fault in him. But they cried out, Crucify him! Pilate said, Take him yourselves and crucify him, for I find no fault in him.

The Jews answered, We have a law, and by this law he ought to die, because he made himself the Son of God.

When Pilate heard that he was the more afraid, and went again into the palace and said to Jesus, From whence dost thou come? But Jesus gave him no answer. Pilate said, Wilt thou not speak to me? Knowest thou not that I have power to set thee free and power to crucify thee? Jesus said, Thou couldst have no power against me except it had been given thee from above, and for this cause he that delivered me unto thee hath greater sin.

From that time Pilate sought to release him. But the Jews cried out, saying, If thou let this man go thou art not Cæsar's friend, for every one that maketh himself a king speaketh against Cæsar.

Now Cæsar was the name of the Emperor of Rome, and Pilate feared to offend him. When, therefore, he heard these words he brought Jesus out and sat down on the judgment-seat at a place called the Pavement, but in the Hebrew it was called Gabbatha, and he said to the Jews, Behold your king! But they cried out, Crucify him! Pilate said, Shall I crucify your king? The chief priests answered, We have no king but Cæsar. Then Pilate gave the Holy One to them to be crucified.

When Judas Iscariot learned that Jesus was to be put to death he was in great terror, and he brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, I have sinned in betraying one who is innocent of any crime. They said, What is that to us? See thou to that. Then Judas threw down the thirty pieces of silver, and they said, It is not lawful to put the money into the treasury, since it was paid to put a man to death. So they bought with the money the Potter's field, where they buried strangers.

"BEHOLD THE MAN."

Judas, filled with remorse for his base treachery towards his Master, went off and hanged himself.

The sentence having been passed upon the Lord that he be crucified, the soldiers took charge of him and prepared to execute it.

They took off the scarlet robe which he was wearing and put on his own garments, and then led him out to the place

JESUS CARRYING HIS CROSS.

where he was to be crucified. Jesus bore his own cross, as was the custom, but under the burden he sank, he was so much exhausted by the great sufferings and loss of blood from the scourging which he had received.

A man named Simon, from northern Africa, met the procession when on its way to Calvary, and the soldiers compelled him to bear the cross, under which the Lord had fallen. And there followed a great multitude of women, who mourned and

JESUS CARRIES HIS CROSS.

wept for him. The Lord turned to them and said, Ye daughters of Jerusalem, weep not for me, but weep for yourselves and for your children for the terrible afflictions that will come upon the Jews.

The hill of Calvary was not far from Jerusalem. It was a small hill, and was called Calvary, or Golgotha, because it was shaped somewhat like a skull.

When they had brought Jesus to the place the Roman sol-

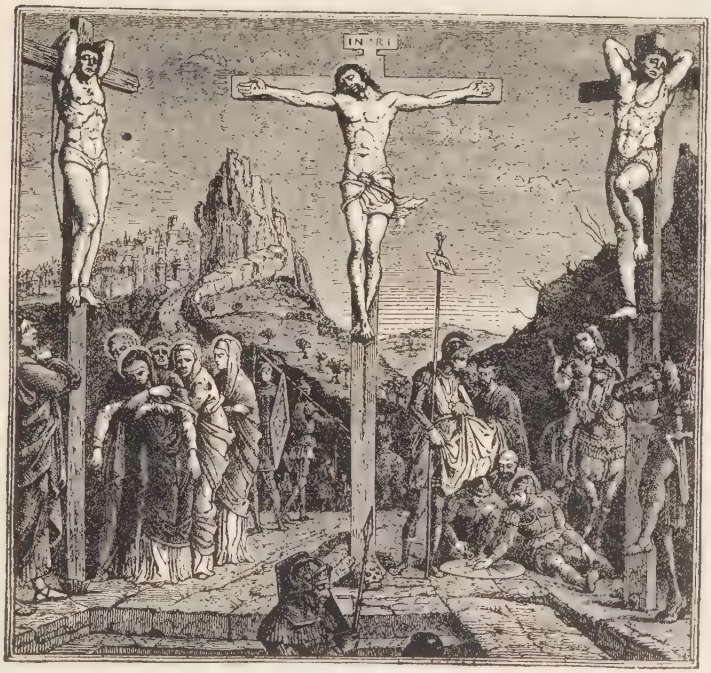
CARRYING THE CROSS.

diers nailed his hands and feet to the cross. And two thieves were crucified with him, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. While they were crucifying him Jesus prayed for them, and said, Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do. They did not know how great was their sin in crucifying the Son of God.

The sufferings of the victim that was crucified were great in the extreme, hence they offered Jesus vinegar, mixed with gall, to drink. This mixture was given to those who were

crucified, to stupefy them, so that they might not feel their dreadful sufferings so much. When our Lord had tasted this he would not drink. He was willing to bear all the pains of such a cruel death that we might be forgiven.

Now those who were crucified died very slowly, and soldiers kept watch near the cross to prevent the body from being taken away. The four soldiers that had crucified the



THE CRUCIFIXION.

Lord sat down to watch him; and they took his garments and divided them among themselves; but his coat was without a seam, and for it they cast lots.

Now it was the custom to put a small tablet on the cross, on which was stated the crime for which the victim was crucified. Pilate, therefore, had written: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." These words were put on the cross over his head, and were read by many of the Jews and others

that passed by, for the place where he was crucified was near the city.

Some cursed the Saviour as he hung on the cross and shook their heads in triumph, saying, If thou art the Son of God, come down from the cross. The chief priests, scribes, and elders also mocked him and said, He saved others, himself he cannot save; if he be the king of Israel let him now come down from the cross and we will believe him. He trusted in God, let him deliver him now if he will have him. Then one of the thieves who was crucified with him said mockingly to him, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us; but the other thief answered, and, rebuking him, said, Dost thou not even fear God, seeing that thou art about to die, and we deserve death for the punishment of our crimes, but this man has done nothing wrong? And this penitent thief said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

Jesus said unto him, To-day shalt thou be with me in Paradise. How quickly Jesus had mercy upon him when the thief prayed, though he had been such a wicked man, and how remarkable the difference in the language of those two thieves that were so near death, and hanging on crosses one on either side of the Redeemer of the world.

Besides the soldiers who watched the bodies there were others at the cross. There stood his mother, his mother's sister, Mary the wife of Cleopas, and Mary Magdalene, and along with these was the beloved John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. Jesus looked upon his mother and upon John and said, Woman, behold thy son! And to the disciple he said, Behold thy mother! The Lord knew his mother would be sad and lonely, therefore he told John to take care of her as if she were his own mother; and he told her to love and lean upon the disciple as if he were her own son. And from that hour John took her to his own home and took care of her.

In a very remarkable way Nature showed her sympathy with the wonderful event of the death of our Redeemer. From the sixth hour of the day until the ninth, which was from twelve o'clock till three in the afternoon, darkness spread over all the land. It was remarkable that the darkness prevailed during the hours when the sky is usually bright-

est. God sent this eclipse to show that even Nature and the God of Nature were amazed at the wickedness of crucifying him who was the light of the world.

About the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon, Jesus cried with a loud voice, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? Jesus bore, as he hung on the cross, the sin of the world, and endured that dreadful feeling of being forsaken of God, because of that sin; yet he was conscious of his spotless innocence. Hence he keenly felt the withdrawal of the presence of God, though he still held fast to him, as we must do in times of suffering and darkness.

Some of those that stood near when they heard Jesus cry out, My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me? said, This man calleth for Elias.

And one of them ran and took a sponge and filled it with vinegar, and, putting it on a reed, lifted it to his mouth and gave him to drink.

When Jesus had taken the vinegar he said, It is finished. The work he had come into the world to do was done. The punishment he was to suffer was over, and he bowed his head and died.

ROMAN CENTURION.

The veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom. The earth shook, the rocks were split, and the tombs were open, and many persons who were servants of God while they lived, came out of their graves after the resurrection of Jesus.

When the centurion and the soldiers under his command, who were watching Jesus, saw the earthquake and the other remarkable events, they were much afraid and said, Truly, this was the Son of God.

CHAPTER XLIII.

THE DESCENT FROM THE CROSS—LAYING JESUS IN THE TOMB —THE RESURRECTION—THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB—"HE IS RISEN"—JESUS APPEARING TO HIS DISCIPLES—THE INCREDULITY OF THOMAS—THE WONDERFUL DRAUGHT OF FISHES—THE ASCENT INTO HEAVEN.

Jesus was crucified on Friday, and the Jewish rulers did not want the bodies of the Saviour and the two culprits to remain on the cross during Saturday, which was the Jewish Sabbath; so they asked Pilate for leave to remove the bodies.

Breaking their legs would hasten their death, and the soldiers came and broke the legs of the two thieves, but when they came to Jesus, and saw that he was dead already, they broke not his legs. But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith there came blood and water.

Not far from Calvary was a garden in which was a new sepulchre, and in it no one had ever yet been laid. It was owned by a rich man named Joseph, who came from Arimathea. He was a disciple of Christ, but did not dare to publicly confess him, for fear of the Jewish authorities. He was a member of the Sanhedrim at the same time.

Joseph asked leave of Pilate to take away the body of the Holy One. Pilate gave him leave. Then Joseph bought fine linen, and went to Golgotha, where he met Nicodemus, who had with him a mixture of myrrh and aloes, about one hundred pound weight. They took down the body and wrapped it in linen, and carried it to the new sepulchre, which Joseph himself had made in a rock in his garden, near Golgotha. And they rolled a stone into the door of the sepulchre and went away.

And Mary Magdalene and Mary the mother of James the Apostle were sitting near the sepulchre and saw where Jesus was laid, and they went home and prepared spices and

ointments to put on his body, as was the custom among the Jews. But they waited and rested on the Sabbath day.

Christ had several times told his disciples and the people that after his death he would rise again on the third day.

LAYING JESUS IN THE TOMB.

And the chief priests and rulers of the Jews remembered this. Therefore they went to Pilate and told him that they had heard Jesus, whom they styled, That deceiver, say he would rise again from the dead the third day.

They requested him to give orders that the sepulchre should be watched and guarded. They were afraid that his disciples would come by night, and steal his body, and then declare that he had risen from the dead.

Pilate told them that they had soldiers at their disposal, and that they might make the tomb as secure as they pleased. They went, therefore, and sealed the stone fast to the rock,

THE RESURRECTION.

and placed soldiers on guard to watch the place. Very early the next morning, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary, toward the dawn of the first day of the week while it was yet dark, went to the sepulchre, carrying sweet spices with which they intended to anoint our Lord's body. On the way their minds were exercised as to who would roll away the big stone from the mouth of the sepulchre. But there was a great earth-

quake, and the angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled back the stone from the door of the tomb, and sat upon it. The countenance of the angel was like lightning, and his raiment white as snow. Those who watched the tomb, when they saw the angel, shook for fear, and became as dead men.

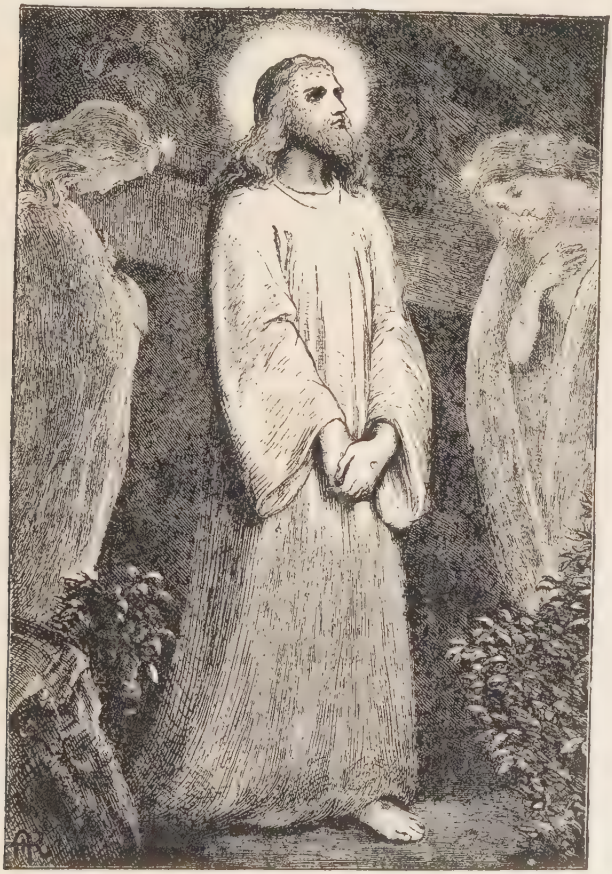
Mary Magdalene, and the other Mary and Salome came to

THE WOMEN AT THE TOMB.

the sepulchre and found the stone rolled away from the door of the tomb. They went in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus. And, as they were much perplexed, two men stood by them in shining garments. The women were afraid, and bowed down their faces to the earth. And the angel said unto them, Why seek ye the living among the dead? Fear not; he is not here, but is risen. See the place where they laid him. But go and tell his disciples and Peter that

he is risen from the dead, and will go before them into Galilee; ye shall see him there.

And the women trembled, and were amazed, and went out quickly and fled from the sepulchre. Yet with joy they ran to tell the disciples of the resurrection of Jesus. On the way



HE IS RISEN.

the Holy One met them and said, All hail! And they held him by the feet and worshipped him. Then the Lord told them not to fear, but to go and tell his brethren to depart into Galilee, and there they should see him. And the women

went and told the eleven apostles, and those that were with them.

When Peter and John heard what the women said, they ran both together to the sepulchre. John got there first, and stooped down and looked in, and saw the linen clothes lie and the napkin which had been on the Lord's head, but he did not go in.

When Peter reached the sepulchre he went in and saw the linen clothes and the napkin. Then John ventured in, and, we are told, that when he saw he believed that his Lord had risen from the dead, and was indeed the Son of God.

Peter and John went to their homes, but Mary stood outside the sepulchre weeping. And as she wept, she stooped down and looked into the sepulchre, and saw two angels sitting, one at the head, and one at the feet where the body of Jesus had lain. They said to her, Woman, why weepest thou? She answered, Because they have taken away my Lord, and I know not where they have laid him. When she had thus spoken, she turned around and saw Jesus standing near, but did not know him.

Jesus said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? Whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the gardener, said unto him, Sir, if thou hast moved him from this place, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. Jesus said unto her, Mary! She turned and said unto him in Hebrew, Rabboni, which is to say, Master! Jesus said unto her, Touch me not, for I have not yet ascended to my Father; but go to my brethren, and tell them that I go to my Father and their Father, to my God and their God.

And Mary Magdalene told the disciples that she had seen the Lord, and gave them the message he had sent.

The Jews have never believed that Jesus rose from the dead, because the soldiers that watched the tomb, when they told the chief priests what had happened, were bribed by them to say that the body of Christ had been stolen away by night. Now Roman soldiers were punished with death if caught sleeping while on guard, but the chief priests promised, if the governor should hear that they had slept at their post, they would obtain pardon for their neglect of duty.

Jesus appeared a number of times, after his resurrection from the dead, to his disciples. On the same day that he arose from the dead two of his disciples were walking towards Emmaus, a village about seven miles distant from Jerusalem. They were talking, as they journeyed, about the strange things that had happened. And while they were thus talking Jesus drew near, and walked with them, but their eyes were holden that they should not know him. And he said to them, What are you conversing about, and why are you so sad? One of the disciples named Cleopas said, Are you a stranger in Jerusalem? Have you not heard of the strange things which have occurred there these days? Jesus said, What things? They said, Concerning Jesus of Nazareth, who was a prophet mighty in deed and word before God and all the people: and how he was condemned to death by the chief priests and rulers, and crucified. We thought he would have delivered our people from the Romans; but this is the third day since his crucifixion, and yet he has not appeared to us. Some of the women were told by an angel that he is alive, and they also saw that his body had left the sepulchre; and some of his disciples went also to the sepulchre and found it even so as the women had said, but did not see the Lord himself. Then Jesus said unto them, O fools and slow of heart, why don't you believe all that the prophets have spoken? Was it not necessary that Christ should suffer these things, and enter into his glory? And he began to teach them all Moses and the prophets had written of himself in the Scripture, showing them that the history of the Jewish people, its prophecies, laws, and ceremonies, were to show forth the Messiah which had appeared and been slain. And still they knew not that it was Jesus who spoke to them.

And they came unto the village of Emmaus; and he made as though he would have gone further, but they persuaded him to abide with them, for it was late in the day. And he abode with them. At supper Jesus took the bread and blessed it, and brake, and gave to them to eat. And their eyes were opened: and he vanished out of their sight. And they said one to another, Did not our heart burn within us while he talked with us by the way, and explained to us the Scriptures?

Then those two disciples returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven disciples and those that were with them, and said to them, The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon. And they told how the Lord had appeared to them on their way to Emmaus, and how they knew him when he brake bread with them.

While the disciples were talking thus, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them, and said, Peace be unto you. But they were terrified, thinking they saw a spirit. Jesus said to them, Why are ye troubled? and why do thoughts arise in your heart? Behold my hands and my feet, for a spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me have.

Having said these things, he showed them his hands and his feet; and they wondered and could scarcely believe for joy. Jesus asked them, Have ye here any meat? And they gave him a piece of a broiled fish and an honeycomb; and he took it and did eat before them.

And he said unto them, These are the words that I spake unto you while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled which are written concerning me. Then he opened their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures, which said that he should suffer death and rise again from the dead on the third day, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in his name to all people, beginning at Jerusalem.

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth in me and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall perish. But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem till ye be endued with power from on high.

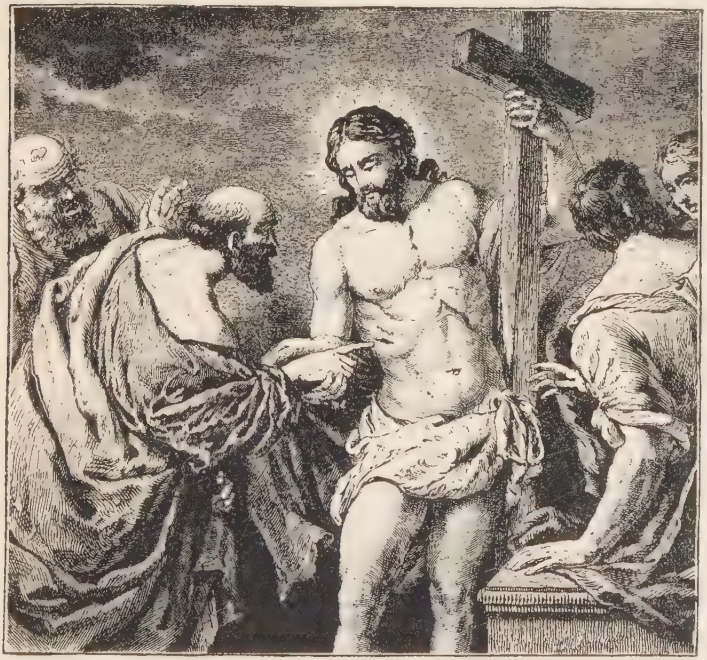
Thomas, one of the disciples, was not at this time with the rest when Jesus appeared in their midst. And when they had told him that they had seen the Lord, he said, Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails and put my finger in the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe.

The disciples were assembled together again after eight days, and Thomas also was with them, and the doors were shut. Jesus came and stood in the midst of them and said,

Peace be unto you. Then he said to Thomas, Reach hither thy fingers and press my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side, and be not faithless, but believing.

And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God. Jesus said unto him, Because thou hast seen me thou hast believed. Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.

The Saviour showed himself again to his disciples at the



THE INCREDULITY OF THOMAS.

sea of Tiberias. There were together Simon Peter and Nathaniel, James and John, and two other of his disciples.

Simon Peter said to the other disciples, I go a fishing. They replied, We also go with thee. They went and entered into a ship immediately ; and that night they caught nothing. When the day began to break, Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples did not know it was Jesus. He said unto them, Children, have ye any meat? They said, no. And he told

them to cast the net on the right side of the boat, and they should find some. They did so, and had not strength enough to draw in the net, because of the multitude of fishes that were enclosed.

The disciple whom Jesus loved said to Peter, It is the Lord. When Peter heard that it was the Lord, he girt his coat about him and threw himself into the sea. The other disciples came in the boat dragging the net full of fishes.

As soon as they had come to land they saw a fire of coals, and fish laid thereon, and bread.

Jesus said to them, Bring of the fish that ye have caught. Peter went and drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty-three, and although there were so many, yet the net was not broken.

The Saviour said unto the disciples, Come and dine. And none of the disciples durst ask him, Who art thou? knowing that it was the Lord. This was the third time that Jesus showed himself after he was risen from the dead.

When they had dined Jesus said to Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He said, Yea, Lord: thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus said unto him, Feed my lambs. This question the Lord repeated twice after this. When spoken the third time, perhaps Peter remembered that he had denied the Lord three times. And he said, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee.

Soon after this interview of Christ's with his disciples, the eleven went to a mountain in Galilee, where Christ himself had told them to go, and where they would see him. It is thought that here was the place where Christ appeared to the five hundred brethren St. Paul speaks of in Corinthians.

The eleven, when they saw him, they worshipped him; but many others that saw him doubted that he was the Saviour.

Before leaving for heaven, the Master gave a universal commission to his disciples to preach the gospel, saying, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teach them

CHRIST APPEARING TO HIS APOSTLES.

to do those things that I have commanded you : and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world.

At the end of forty days, Jesus came again to the disciples in Jerusalem, and he talked with them and commanded them to stay in the city until they should be endued with power from on high.

One day Jesus led his disciples out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands and blessed them.

The apostles still retained their carnal hopes concerning the Redeemer's kingdom, and they asked him, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel? Jesus said, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons which the Father hath in his own power ; but ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.

Then Jesus was taken up, and a cloud received him out of their sight. While they looked toward heaven as he went up, two men stood by them in white apparel and said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus will so come in like manner as ye have seen him go.

He would not come to live with them as he had done before, but would come for his people and to judge the nations.

After the Lord had been taken up into heaven the disciples returned to Jerusalem and went into an upper room. There they continued with one accord in prayer and supplication, with the women, and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brethren.

There were about one hundred and twenty in all. Then Peter stood up in their midst and said that the Scripture prophecies concerning Judas must needs have been fulfilled, for David said in the Book of Psalms, Let his house be desolate, and let no man dwell therein, and his office, let another take ; for he was numbered among us as an apostle. Peter advised that a new apostle be elected to take the place of Judas, and that the man chosen should be one that had been with them from the baptism of John to the close of the Lord's ministry ; who also had been a witness of his resurrection.

Then two men were selected, named Joseph and Matthias.

And they prayed and said, Thou, O Lord, who knowest the hearts of all men, show which of these two thou hast chosen. And they cast lots, and the lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

CHAPTER XLIV.

THE COMING OF THE HOLY GHOST—THE APOSTLES SPEAK IN VARIOUS LANGUAGES—THREE THOUSAND CONVERTED—PETER CURES THE CRIPPLE—PETER AND JOHN IMPRISONED—DEATH OF ANANIAS AND SAPPHIRA—THE ANGEL OPENS THE PRISON DOORS—GAMALIEL.

Ten days had now passed away, and the day of Pentecost, which was the day for the feast of the harvest, was come.

The disciples were all gathered together in one place, praying with one accord. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, sitting upon the head of each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and could speak with other tongues beside their own, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Multitudes of people were in Jerusalem attending the feast. Many of them were Jews that had left Judea, and lived in other countries, and who spake the language of those countries.

The noise of the rushing mighty wind was heard over the whole city and drew a great crowd to the place where the disciples were assembled.

They were all amazed when they heard the disciples speak in so many different languages, and said, Are not all these that speak Galileans? What means this that they can speak so many different languages? And besides they are ignorant and unlettered men. Others mocked and said, These men are full of new wine. But Peter stood up, and said they were

not drunken, it being only the third hour of the day, which was nine o'clock in the morning. He told them that what they had seen was the fulfilment of the prophecy of Joel, that the Holy Ghost should be poured out upon men and women, both old and young, and that the wonderful gifts which they saw and heard were bestowed upon them by Christ Jesus, whom they had crucified and slain.

Peter preached in this way the first Christian sermon ever preached in the streets of Jerusalem, telling the people how to be saved. They would be saved if they would repent of their sins, and believe on Christ whom they had crucified, but whom God had raised from the dead and exalted to his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour. It was Jesus also who had sent upon them the Holy Ghost. Peter's sermon produced remarkable effects. Under the power of the word and the Holy Ghost, multitudes were convinced of sin, and three thousand souls were converted and were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The descent of the Spirit upon the apostles made a great change in them. Instead of being weak, they became strong. Peter, who was such a coward that he trembled at the voice of a servant-maid and had denied his Master, became so full of love and courage that he could face the multitude in preaching Jesus and the resurrection, and was ready, if necessary, to die for his Master; so also were all the other disciples. The people that were converted were all united in fellowship as well as in doctrine, in breaking of bread and in prayers. They sold all their possessions and goods, and ministered help to every one according to his need, and they went daily to the temple as long as it stood to attend the public services to which they had been accustomed from childhood.

Their principal act of worship was to eat bread and drink wine with gladness and singleness of heart, in memory of the Saviour's last supper with his disciples. They praised God, and had favor with all the people; and the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.

Peter and John went up to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour, which was three o'clock in the afternoon, the hour of the evening sacrifice. At the Beautiful Gate of the

temple, probably the eastern gate, which was covered with large plates of silver and gold, there sat a poor cripple who had been lame from his birth, and was carried every day by his friends and laid at the gate to beg from those who passed in and out. Seeing Peter and John about to go into the temple the cripple asked them for alms. Peter fixed his eyes upon him and said, Look on us. The man gave attention to them, expecting to

PETER CURES THE CRIPPLE.

receive something from them. Then Peter said, Silver and gold have I none; but what I have I give unto thee. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk.

And he took him by the right hand and lifted him up; and immediately his feet and ankle-bones received strength, and then he entered into the temple, leaping, and walking, and praising God.

And all the people saw him; and they knew that it was

he that sat at the Beautiful Gate of the temple, a helpless beggar, and were astonished at the greatness of the miracle, and ran to the place where Peter and John were standing.

Peter said to them, Ye men of Israel, why do ye marvel at this, or why do you look so earnestly on us as though by our own power we had made this man to walk? We are followers of Jesus, whom ye delivered up and denied in the presence of Pilate when he wanted to let him go. We believe in Jesus, and he has given us the power to make this man strong. Repent, therefore, and believe, that your sins may be forgiven, so that at the second coming of Christ you may be admitted to heaven.

As the disciples were teaching thus in the temple the priests, and the ruler of the temple, and the Sadducees came and were provoked because they taught the people. The Sadducees were particularly annoyed because they taught the resurrection of the dead, for they did not believe that the dead would rise again. And, being leaders of the people, it made them angry to see the crowds that gathered around the apostles. Therefore, when Peter and John were speaking at the temple, they took them and put them in prison until they should be brought before the Sanhedrim, the great Council of the Jewish Church. The next day the Sanhedrim met, and when Peter and John were brought in they asked them, By what power or by what name have ye done this miracle?

Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said unto them, Ye rulers of the people and elders of Israel, if we be examined as to the means by which this lame man was made to walk, know all of you that the miracle was done in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom ye crucified, and whom God raised from the dead. You rejected him as your Saviour and King, and God has made him ruler over all; and his name is the only one in all the world that can save us from the punishment of our sins.

The rulers, knowing that the apostles were poor and unlearned men, were astonished that Peter could stand before them so boldly and speak in such powerful language.

But seeing the lame man standing near them, they could not deny the reality of the miracle which had been wrought.

And when they had commanded the apostles to go aside out of the Council, they talked among themselves, saying, What shall we do to these men? for that they have wrought a remarkable miracle is well known to all the people in Jerusalem, and we cannot deny it. But that it may spread no further, let us forbid them to preach any more to the people.

The apostles were again called to the bar and strictly forbidden by the rulers to speak or teach in the name of Jesus. Peter and John boldly replied, Whether it is right to obey you rather than God, you yourselves may judge, for we cannot help telling the people about Jesus and the wonderful things we saw and heard during his life on earth.

So when the rulers had threatened them again they released them, because they were afraid of the people. The two apostles then went to the company of apostles and disciples and told them all that the chief priests and elders had said to them. And they all prayed together that God would grant them boldness to preach the gospel, and that signs and wonders might be done by the name of Jesus.

When they had prayed the place was shaken where they were gathered; and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and spake the word of God with boldness.

This showed that God had answered their prayer. And they went out and preached again to the people, and bore witness to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus with great power; and great grace was upon them all.

All that believed met together and were of one heart and of one soul; and those that had land and houses sold them and brought the money to the apostles, and it was distributed to each according to his need.

But there was a certain man named Ananias, with Sapphira his wife, who sold their property and kept back part of the price; the other part they brought and laid at the apostles' feet, and in this way thought to deceive the apostles, and to make them think that they were true disciples of Jesus, while in their hearts was still a love of earthly gain.

God made known their guilt to Peter. And when Ananias brought his rich offering of money, Peter said to him, Ananias, why hath Satan put it in thine heart to lie unto the Holy

Ghost, and to keep back part of the price of the land? The land was yours, and after you sold it, the money you received for it was yours. Why did you conceive this thing in your heart? Thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God. When Ananias heard these words he fell down dead, for thus the Lord punished him for his sin. And some of the young men that were there took and carried him out of the city and buried him. About three hours afterward his wife Sapphira came into the room where the disciples were, not knowing what had happened to her husband. Peter said unto her, Tell me if ye sold the land for so much? And she said, Yes, for so much. Then Peter said, How is it that ye have agreed together to tempt the Spirit of the Lord? Behold, the men that have buried your husband are at the door, and they shall carry you out also. Immediately she fell down at Peter's feet and died.

And the young men coming in, and finding her dead, carried her out and buried her by her husband.

Then great fear fell on all that heard these things. And the apostles wrought many signs and wonders among the people, and multitudes believed and were added to the Lord. The sick were brought into the streets, and laid on beds and couches, that at least the shadow of Peter passing by might overshadow some of them.

There came also multitudes out of the cities, round about unto Jerusalem, bringing with them the sick and those that were vexed with unclean spirits, and they were healed. But the high priest and the Sadducees were filled with indignation and jealousy because of the spread of the new religion; and they took hold of the apostles and put them in the common prison. And an angel of the Lord came down at night and opened the prison doors, and brought them forth, and said, Go, stand in the temple, and speak to the people all the words of this life. And they went up to the temple early in the morning, and taught as the angel commanded. But the high priest and the Sadducees, not knowing of the escape of the prisoners, called the whole Council together, and sent to the prison to have the apostles brought out. When the officers went to the prison and did not find them, they came back to

the Council, saying, The prison truly was locked and barred, and the keepers were watching before the doors; but when we went in we found no prisoners there.

When the rulers heard this they were filled with terror,

DEATH OF SAPPHIRA.

knowing what effect it would have upon the people. And while they were in doubt what to do there came a messenger, saying, The men whom you put in prison are in the temple teaching the people.

Then the captain went with the officers and arrested them, but did them no violence, because they were afraid of the people. They set them before the Council, and the high priest asked them, Did we not tell you not to teach any more in the name of Jesus? But you have filled Jerusalem with your devotions, and you intend to bring this man's blood upon us.

Peter and the other apostles answered, We ought to obey God rather than men; Jesus, whom ye crucified, has been exalted by the right hand of God to be a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to the Jews, and forgiveness of sins; and we have been chosen by him to tell you these things.

The guilt of the crucifixion of our Lord being fastened upon the rulers, they were cut to the heart and took counsel together to slay them.

But a Pharisee named Gamaliel, a doctor of the law, stood up in the Council and commanded the apostles to be sent out of the Council for a little while.

When they had gone out he said, Ye men of Israel, take heed how ye treat these men. Not long ago Theudas rose up, and above four hundred men joined themselves to him, and both him and them were slain. Afterwards another man, named Judas of Galilee, drew many people after him, and they also perished. Now let these men alone: for if this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to naught; but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it, and you may be found fighting against God.

And the members of the Council agreed with Gamaliel, and when they had called the apostles, and beaten them, they told them not to speak in the name of Jesus, and then let them go.

And the apostles left the Council rejoicing that they were counted worthy to suffer shame for the name of Jesus; and in spite of the persecution of their enemies they continued daily in the temple preaching, and in every house they ceased not to teach and to preach Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XLV.

STEPHEN ANSWERS HIS ACCUSERS—MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN—PHILIP PREACHES AT SAMARIA—SIMON THE SORCERER—CONVERSION OF THE EUNUCH—CONVERSION OF ST. PAUL—PAUL ESCAPES FROM DAMASCUS—PETER CURES ÆNEAS OF PALSY AND RAISES DORCAS TO LIFE.

THE number of Christians increased very rapidly in the primitive church, and amongst them were many who were very poor.

The Grecians or Jews who were born outside Judea, but who spoke Greek, complained against the Hebrews that the proper share of food and money was not given them.

Then the apostles called the disciples together and said, It is not right that we should neglect the preaching of the word in order to serve or to look after these matters. Therefore, brethren, select from among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Spirit and wisdom, and let them attend to these duties. We must continue in prayer and the ministry of the word.

The disciples were pleased with this proposal, and they chose seven men to be Deacons. Their names were: Stephen, Philip, Prochorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicolas. These seven were brought before the apostles, who ordained them to the work by prayer and the laying on of their hands.

Stephen was full of faith and power, and did great wonders among the people. Then some of the Jewish doctors from the synagogues came to argue and dispute with Stephen.

And they stirred up the people and the elders and the scribes, and caught Stephen and brought him before the Council, and set up false witnesses which said, This man speaketh blasphemously against the temple and against the Law. We have heard him say that Jesus of Nazareth will destroy this place and change the rites which Moses gave us.

And all that sat in the Council looked steadfastly on Stephen, and his face looked as it were the face of an angel.

Then said the high priest, Are these things so? Stephen answered:

Men and brethren, listen unto me. God appeared to our father Abraham and said, Leave thy country and thy kindred and come into the land which I will show you. And Abraham left his own country and came to this land where ye now live.

And God promised to give the land to him and to his descendants after he was dead. God said that Abraham's descendants should live in a country that was not their own four hundred years, and that the people of that country would keep them in slavery and treat them most cruelly.

But God told Abraham that he would punish the people who treated them so, and would bring Abraham's descendants out of that land, and they should serve God in the land of Canaan. Afterwards God gave Abraham a son, who was called Isaac. And Isaac had a son named Jacob, and Jacob had twelve sons, called the twelve patriarchs. Joseph was one of the twelve; and his brethren were jealous of him, and sold him to Ishmaelites, who brought him down to Egypt.

But God was with Joseph, and gave him favor in the eyes of Pharaoh, king of Egypt. And Pharaoh appointed Joseph governor over all of Egypt.

A great famine arose both in Egypt and Canaan; and when Jacob heard that there was corn in Egypt he sent his sons down there to buy food. Joseph knew them as soon as he saw them, and told Pharaoh who they were. And Joseph told them to bring their father and their families into the land of Egypt. And they all went into Egypt, and Jacob died there, but his body was afterwards removed to Shechem in the land of Canaan, and was buried in the sepulchre that Abraham bought of Ephron the Hittite.

The people of Israel increased rapidly in Egypt till another king arose who knew not Joseph, and who oppressed the Israelites.

Stephen also related how God raised up Moses to be their deliverer, and how he led them out of Egypt and through the

Red Sea, and how he was in the wilderness with them for forty years. It was this same Moses who told the children of Israel that God would raise up a prophet like unto himself from among them, to whom they would give heed. It was Moses that received God's Laws on Mount Sinai that he might teach them to our fathers. But our fathers would not obey those Laws, and in their hearts turned back to Egypt.

They asked Aaron to make them a calf as an idol for them

MARTYRDOM OF STEPHEN.

to worship, and said of Moses, when he was up in the mount, As for this Moses who brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we know not what has become of him.

And Aaron made them a golden calf, and they offered up sacrifice to the idol, and worshipped it. And God was angry with them, and allowed them to worship the sun, moon, and stars, but said that as a punishment they should be carried

captives beyond Babylon. After Stephen had spoken of David and Solomon, he said to them, As your fathers did, so do ye; ye do always resist the Holy Ghost. Your fathers persecuted every one of the prophets, and killed those who foretold the coming of the Saviour, whom ye have betrayed and murdered. You have received the Law, but you have not observed it.

These words of Stephen greatly enraged the members of the Council, so that they gnashed on him with their teeth. But he was full of the Holy Ghost, and looked up steadfastly into heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing on the right hand of God.

Stephen told them what he saw. And they cried out with a loud voice, and stopped their ears, so that they would not hear his words; and they rushed upon him, took him out of the city, and stoned him.

While they were stoning him Stephen knelt down and cried, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit; and he cried once more with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he had said this he died.

Saul, who was afterwards the great apostle Paul, was present and held the raiment of those who slew Stephen. When they stoned him they took off part of their clothing so that they might use their arms more freely. Devout men carried Stephen to the grave and mourned very much for him.

Great persecution arose about this time. Saul made havoc of the Church. To show his hatred toward the disciples, he went into every house to find those who believed in Jesus, and took men and women and put them in prison. And the disciples were scattered abroad from Jerusalem, and went about preaching the gospel in other places.

Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and there preached Christ unto the people. They gave great attention to his words and saw the miracles which he did, for unclean spirits, crying loudly, came out at his command, and those persons that were sick with the palsy or were lame were also cured. And there was great joy in that city.

There was at Samaria a man, named Simon, who before that time had pretended to do wonderful things, bewitching the

people with sorceries. But when Philip preached the glad tidings concerning the kingdom of God, many believed and were baptized.

Then Simon said that he believed; and after he was baptized he staid with Philip, wondering at the miracles which he was able to perform. The apostles in Jerusalem heard of the great work which was being done in Samaria, and sent unto

THE CONVERSION OF THE EUNUCH.

them Peter and John, who came to that city and prayed that the Holy Spirit might be given to those that believed. Then they laid their hands on the heads of those who had been baptized, and God poured forth his Holy Spirit upon them.

When Simon saw that by laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money, saying, Give *me* also this power, that those on whom I lay my hands

may receive the Holy Spirit. But Peter said to him, Thy money perish with thee, because you have thought that the gift of God could be bought with money. Your thinking so shows that you have had no change of heart, and that you have neither part nor lot in the salvation of God.

Peter said further, Repent of thy sin, and pray the Lord to forgive thee, for I see that you are still in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity. Then Simon answered, Pray you to the Lord for me, that I may not be punished.

About this time an angel of the Lord told Philip to go toward the south unto the way that leads from Jerusalem unto Gaza. And he arose and went. On the way he met a man of Ethiopia, who was an officer in great authority under the queen of the Ethiopians, and who had charge of all her treasures.

This man was sitting in his chariot, returning from Jerusalem, where he had been worshipping. As he sat in the chariot he read Esais the prophet; and the Spirit told Philip to go near the chariot and to speak to the man.

And Philip ran and came near to the chariot, and heard the eunuch read aloud from the prophet Isaiah. And he said to him, Understandest thou what thou readest? The eunuch answered, How can I unless some one explain it to me; and he invited Philip to sit beside him in the chariot.

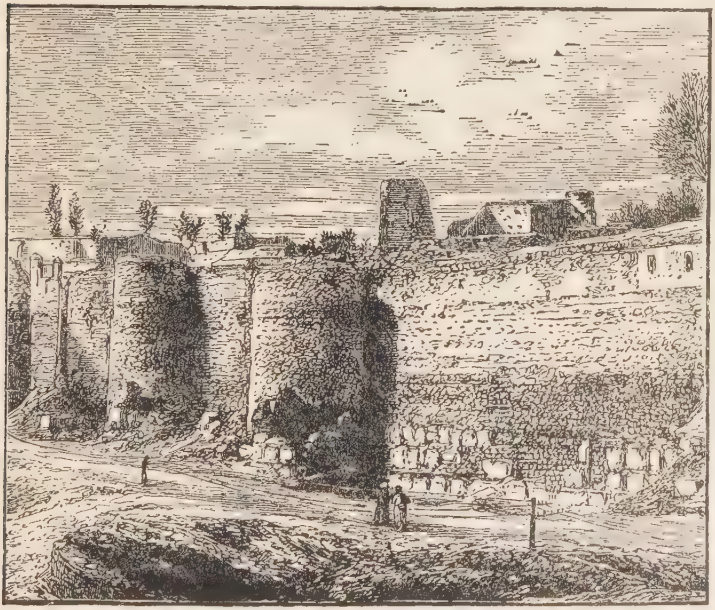
The Scripture that the eunuch read was from Isaiah: He was led as a lamb to the slaughter; and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. The eunuch said to Philip, I pray thee, tell me of whom did the prophet say this, of himself or of some other man? Then Philip began and explained this part of the Scripture, and told him all about the life and death of Jesus of Nazareth.

As they went on their way they came to where there was water; and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me from being baptized? Philip said, If thou believest, with all thy heart, thou mayest. The eunuch answered, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still; and they went down both to the water, and the evangelist baptized him.

And when they were come out of the water the Spirit of

the Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more. But feeling sure that the message was sent to him from heaven, the eunuch went on his way rejoicing. Philip was found at Azotus; and passing through, he preached the gospel in all the cities till he came to Cæsarea.

Saul still breathed out slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. He went unto the high priest and obtained authority from him to arrest any Christians, and to bring them bound unto Jerusalem that they might be punished.



HOUSES ON THE WALLS OF DAMASCUS.

On his journey, and as he drew near Damascus, there suddenly shone around him a dazzling light from heaven, and Jesus appeared to him and said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? Saul answered, Who art thou, Lord? The voice answered, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.

Drivers of oxen made use of goads; these goads were eight feet long, and armed at one end with a sharp piece of iron to

prick into the flesh; at the other end was a small spade for cleansing the plough. If the oxen were obedient they would not need the goad, but if they kicked against it they would prick themselves quite severely. Saul trembled, and was astonished, and said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?

The Lord said, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. And the men that journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but not understanding what was said.

When Saul rose from the ground and tried to see he found that he was blind, and his companions led him by the hand, and brought him to Damascus. And he was three days without sight, and did neither eat nor drink.

A disciple named Ananias lived in Damascus; and the Lord told him to arise and to go into the street called Straight, and inquire at the house of Judas for a man named Saul of Tarsus; for, behold, he prayeth.

Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem; and he hath power from the chief priests to bind in chains all that call on thy name.

But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way, for I have chosen him to preach my gospel to the Gentiles; for I will show him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake.

Ananias, no doubt, rejoiced because of the change wrought in Saul, and went to the house of Judas, where he found him, and put his hands on him, saying, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to thee in the way as thou camest has sent me, that you may be healed of your blindness and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales; and his eyes were opened, and he could see.

And he rose up and was baptized. After he had eaten food he was strengthened, and stayed for several days with the disciples who were in Damascus; and he went into the synagogue and declared that Christ was the Son of God.

This astonished the people, who inquired, Is not this the man that persecuted the Christians and would have them arrested and punished?

But Paul stood up boldly for Christ, and confounded the Jews that dwelt at Damascus, proving out of the Scriptures that Jesus was really the Christ.

The Jews then took counsel to kill him, and watched the

THE CONVERSION OF PAUL.

gates day and night lest he should escape. But Paul knew of the plot that was laid against him, and the disciples took him by night and let him down in a basket from the window of the house that was over the wall, and he escaped to Jerusalem unharmed.

At Jerusalem he wanted to join himself to the disciples; but they were all afraid of him, and did not believe him to be a true disciple.

But a man named Barnabas told them the story of his miraculous conversion, and how he had seen the Lord and preached the gospel boldly at Damascus. Then they received him, and he preached boldly at Jerusalem also.

But some of the Jews became enraged, and determined to kill him; and when the disciples heard this they sent him to Tarsus.

After this the churches had rest throughout all Judea, Galilee, and Samaria.

No one troubled the disciples, and they preached the word in peace and comfort, and multitudes believed.

Peter at this time left Jerusalem to visit the converts in different parts of the country. And he came to Lydda, where he found a man named Æneas, who had been in his bed eight years sick of the palsy. Peter said, Æneas, Jesus Christ maketh thee whole. Arise and make thy bed. And he arose immediately. And many of those living at Lydda and Sharon saw that he was cured and turned to the Lord.

At Joppa there was a certain disciple named Dorcas, who was zealous in good deeds and very kind to the poor. At this time she fell sick and died; and they washed her dead body and laid it in an upper room ready for burial.

And because Lydda was near to Joppa, and the disciples heard that Peter was there, they sent two men to bid him make haste and come to them. Peter arose and went with them; and when he was come to the house they brought him into the upper chamber where the body of Dorcas was. And all the poor widows stood by him showing the coats and garments which Dorcas had made while she was with them.

But Peter put them all out of the room, and kneeled down and prayed, and, turning to the dead body, he said, Dorcas, arise! And she that had been dead opened her eyes, and seeing Peter she sat up; and he took her by the hand; and when he had called those who were in the house he gave her to them alive and well.

This miracle became known throughout all Joppa, and many

believed in Jesus. And Peter tarried many days in that town with one Simon the tanner.

CHAPTER XLVI.

CORNELIUS THE CENTURION—PETER'S VISION ON THE HOUSE-TOP AT JOPPA—HEBREW CHRISTIANS FIND FAULT WITH PETER—BARNABAS AT ANTIOCH—HEROD PERSECUTES THE CHRISTIANS, KILLS JAMES, AND IMPRISONS PETER — THE ANGEL DELIVERS PETER FROM PRISON—DEATH OF HEROD —PAUL HEALS THE CRIPPLE AT LYSTRA—PAUL AND BARNABAS ARE MISTAKEN FOR GODS—PAUL IS STONED, AND LEFT FOR DEAD.

THERE was a beautiful city on the seacoast about thirty miles from Joppa. Cornelius, who was a centurion of the Italian Band in the Roman army, lived here. He was a Gentile and uncircumcised, yet was a devout man and feared God with all his house, gave much alms to the poor, and prayed to God always.

God heard his prayers. And about the ninth hour of the day, or three o'clock, the hour of the evening sacrifice, as he was seeking God by fasting and prayer, he had a vision. An angel of God came to him and said, Cornelius. And when he looked upon him earnestly, he was afraid, and said, What is it, Lord? The angel answered, God has remembered thy prayers and thine alms. Now send men to Joppa for a man named Peter, who is staying with Simon a tanner, whose house is by the seaside. He shall tell thee what thou oughtest to do.

When the angel was gone Cornelius called two servants of the household and a devout soldier whom he kept near to wait on him. And when he had told him what to do he sent them to Joppa.

On the morrow, as they went on their journey and drew near to the city, Peter went up to the housetop to pray. It was the sixth hour, which was noon. And while Peter was

engaged in prayer he became very hungry and wanted to eat. But while they made ready, he fell into a trance, and saw heaven opened, and as it were a great sheet knit at the four corners let down to the earth. In it were all manner of four-footed beasts and creeping things. And there came a voice saying, Rise, Peter, kill and eat.

Now Moses had commanded the Jews to eat only the flesh of certain kinds of animals, and it gave Peter a great shock to be told to eat swine's flesh and foul reptiles. Therefore he said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that was common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done three times, and the vessel was received up again into heaven.

The reason God sent this vision to Peter was to correct some erroneous Jewish notions which he had. One was that the Jewish people were better than any other class of people. They thought they were because God had chosen them to be his people, and they called other nations unclean, and would not have given them the blessings of the gospel.

But God taught Peter by the vision which he had seen that such ideas were utterly wrong. The sheet, with all that was in it, was drawn up to heaven after Peter had seen the vision. Peter was thinking earnestly on the vision when the Spirit said unto him, Behold, three men seek thee. The three men whom Cornelius sent were at the door of Simon's house, and asked if a man named Peter was staying there. And the Spirit said to Peter, Arise, therefore, and get thee down, and go with them, fearing nothing, for I have sent them.

Peter therefore went down to the men and said, Behold, I am he whom you seek. For what reason have you come? They said, Cornelius the centurion, a just man, and one that feareth God, and of good report among all the nation of the Jews, was commanded by a holy angel to send for thee to come to his house that he might be taught the way of God.

Then Peter invited them into the house, and they stayed there all night. And on the morrow he went away with them, and disciples from Joppa accompanied him.

Cornelius was expecting them, and had invited a number of

his relations and intimate friends to be with him when Peter came.

As Peter entered the house Cornelius met him, and fell down at his feet, and worshipped him. But Peter raised him up, saying, Stand up; I myself also am a man like thyself.

Then Peter went in with him and found many persons gath-

PETER ON THE HOUSETOP AT JOPPA.

ered together; and he said unto them, You know that it is wrong for a Jew to keep company with a man of another nation. But God has showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean; therefore came I as soon as I was sent for, and would ask for what reason you have sent for me.

And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this

hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, and said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, thy good deeds to the poor God has not forgotten; send, therefore, to Joppa for a man named Peter; he is staying at the house of one Simon a tanner, who lives by the seaside. When he comes he will speak unto thee. Immediately, therefore, I sent for thee; and thou hast well done to come, and we are gathered here to hear the message.

Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is ready to accept a man of one nation as well as any other; but in every nation whoever fears God and worketh righteousness is acceptable to him.

You know the word which God sent unto the children of Israel, and which was published through all Judea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power, who went about doing good.

We his apostles were witnesses of all things that he did in the land of Judea and in Jerusalem, where they took him and put him to death. But God raised him up the third day, and showed him to us; and we did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.

And he commanded us to preach to the people, and tell them that God had appointed him to be the Judge of all men; and to him all the prophets gave witness, that through his name all those who believe on him shall receive remission of sins.

While Peter was yet speaking, the Holy Spirit came upon Cornelius and the Gentiles who were with him, and they spake with tongues and magnified God. Then Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and said that they should be baptized as well as the Jews themselves who had become Christians, inasmuch as they had received the Holy Ghost.

The Hebrew Christians in Jerusalem had heard that the Gentiles had received the word of God, and that Peter, the chief of the apostles, had consented to be entertained by a Gentile, had preached Christ unto him, and had baptized him though he had not been circumcised.

The idea that Peter had disregarded the Jewish law and ritual provoked the Jews ; and when he went up to Jerusalem they found fault with him, and said, You went into the houses of the Gentiles and ate with them. But Peter explained all to them from the beginning, and told them of the vision which he had, and the lesson it taught him ; also how the Spirit commanded him to go to the house of Cornelius and preach to him and his family, and also how the Holy Ghost came upon them while he was speaking as He came upon those in the upper room on the day of Pentecost. Therefore, as God sent his Spirit upon them, who was I that I could withstand God?

The apostles and disciples could make no reply, but held their peace and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life. The disciples who were scattered and driven from Jerusalem by persecution after the martyrdom of Stephen went to Samaria, Damascus, and the cities on the shores of the Mediterranean, even as far as Antioch, which was in the north of Syria. The disciples in Phœnicia and Cyprus preached only to the Jews, but when they came to Antioch they began preaching to the Gentiles, and numbers believed.

When the apostles in Jerusalem heard of this, they sent Barnabas to Antioch, who, when he came there and saw how many believed, was glad ; and he spoke to and encouraged them all to keep in the right way, loving and serving the Lord ; for Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Ghost and of faith, and through his preaching many people believed in Jesus, and embraced Christianity.

Then Barnabas departed to Tarsus, seeking for Saul ; and when he had found him he brought him unto Antioch, and during a whole year they stayed with the disciples who met together in that city, and preached the gospel to a great many people.

It was in Antioch that the disciples were first called Christians. About this time there came prophets to Antioch from Jerusalem. One of them named Agabus spoke by the Spirit, and said that there should be dearth throughout the world. Then the disciples were determined to send relief unto the

brethren which dwelt in Judea, each giving as much as he could spare.

It was about this time that Herod began to persecute the Christians. He killed James, the brother of John, with the sword; and because he saw that it pleased the Jews, he took Peter also and put him in prison, and set soldiers to watch, intending after Easter to execute him.

The Church prayed for Peter without ceasing. The apostle was not only inside strong walls, heavy doors, and iron gates, but in addition, to prevent his escape the more certainly, he was made to sleep between two soldiers, bound with two chains which were fastened to the soldiers' hands, while the keepers before the door kept the prison.

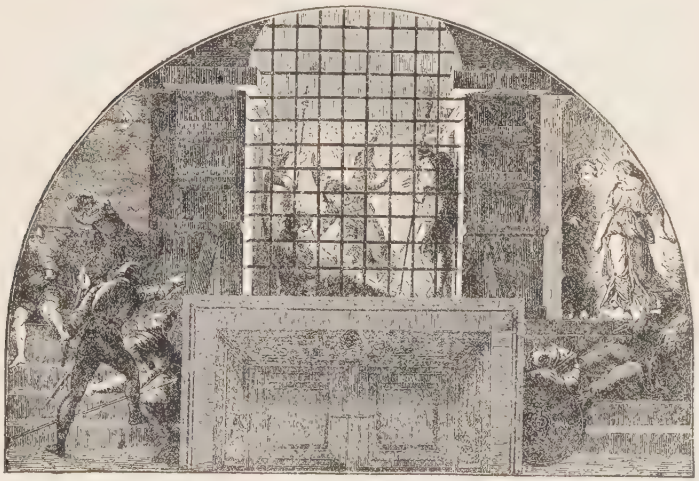
But the angel of the Lord came to Peter and touched his side, and wakened him, saying, Arise up quickly. The chains fell off Peter's hands, and the angel told him to gird himself and put on his sandals. And he did so. And the angel said, Throw thy cloak around thee and follow me. Peter followed him, thinking it was all only a dream or a vision. They passed the guard of soldiers and came to the iron gate that led into the city, which opened of its own accord. And they went out into the street, and the angel disappeared.

When Peter came to himself he exclaimed, Now I am sure that the Lord hath sent his angel, and hath delivered me out of the hand of Herod, and from the Jews who intended to slay me. He went to the house of Mary, the mother of Mark, where the Christians were engaged in prayer for his deliverance. He knocked at the gate, and a young woman named Rhoda came to open it. When she heard his well-known voice she was so filled with joy that, instead of opening the gate to let him in, she ran back to tell the company the glad news, leaving the apostle to stand outside. When she told the company that Peter was at the gate they said she was mad, and when she affirmed that it was he, they said it was his angel.

But Peter continued knocking; and when they opened the door and saw him they were amazed, but he made signs that they should be still, and told them how the Lord had brought him out of prison.

And he said, Go, show these things to James and to the other apostles. And he departed and went to another place. Next morning the soldiers were greatly excited when they missed Peter; and Herod examined the keepers, and commanded that they should be put to death. He believed they had slept at their post, and the penalty of this was death.

Herod then left Jerusalem and went to Cæsarea, where, upon a set day, he sat upon his throne, arrayed in royal apparel, and made an oration to the people. The multitude when they heard it gave a shout and said, It is the voice of



THE ANGEL DELIVERING PETER FROM PRISON.

a god, and not of a man. These words, which were blasphemous, pleased Herod, who was full of pride and fond of flattery.

The Lord was very angry at Herod and sent an angel to smite him because he gave not God the glory; and he was eaten up of worms, and gave up the ghost.

There were many teachers and preachers at Antioch, and as they ministered to the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work to which I have called them. And when they had fasted, and prayed, and laid their hands on them they sent them away.

So these two great men left Antioch and sailed in a ship to the island of Cyprus. At Salamis they went to the synagogues and taught the Jews there, having Mark to help them.

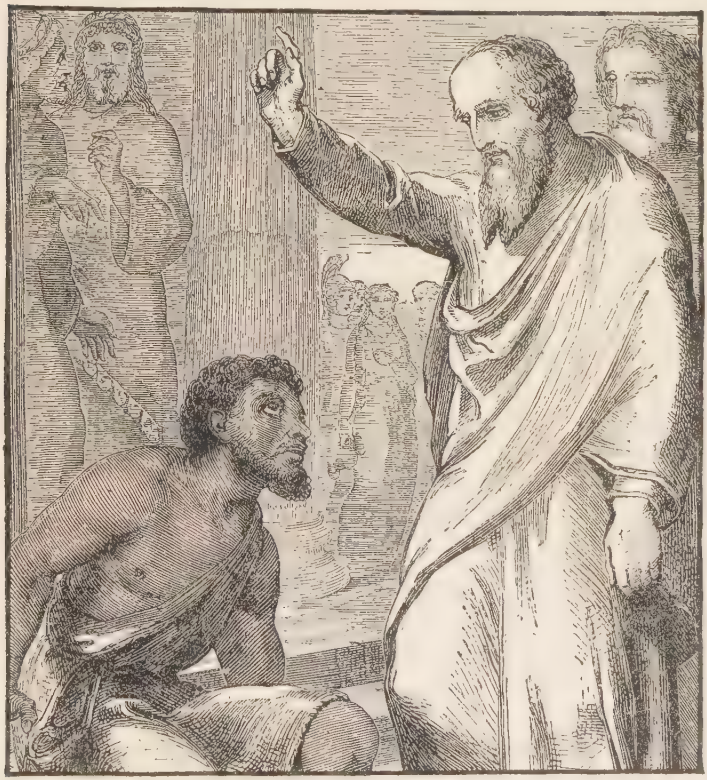
At Paphas, another city in the island, they found a man named Elymas, who was a false prophet, or magician, and was with the deputy governor. The governor sent for Paul and Barnabas that he might hear the word of God. Elymas spoke against them and sought to keep the deputy from embracing Christianity, but Paul, who was full of the Holy Ghost, looked steadily at Elymas and said, O thou who art full of all subtlety and all mischief, thou child of the devil, thou enemy of all righteousness, will you not cease to oppose the right ways of the Lord? Now behold the hand of the Lord is upon thee, and thou shalt be blind and not see the sun for a while. And immediately he was blind, and went about seeking some one to lead him by the hand.

The governor believed what the apostle said, when he saw the miracle that was wrought. Then Paul and his company sailed to Perga in Pamphylia, John returned to Jerusalem, and the rest came to Antioch and went into the synagogue on the Sabbath day and sat down. After the Law and the Prophets had been read the rulers of the synagogue sent unto them, saying, Ye men and brethren, if ye have any word of exhortation for the people, say on.

Paul stood up and beckoned with his hand and said, Men of Israel, and ye that fear God, give audience. The God of the people of Israel made our fathers his chosen people, and when they were strangers in the land of Egypt he set them free by his glorious power, and fed and clothed them during the forty years they wandered. And when he had destroyed seven nations in the land of Canaan he divided the land among his chosen people by lot. He gave them judges to rule over them till the time of Samuel the prophet. Then they asked for a king, and God gave them Saul, who reigned over them forty years. After Saul, David sat on the throne. And God also gave them a Saviour who was descended from David. John the Baptist said he was not worthy to unloose the latchet of the Saviour's shoes, yet the rulers of Jerusalem put him to death. But God raised him from the dead, and

now all who believe in him shall have their sins forgiven. Beware, therefore, lest by despising Jesus, you perish forever.

When the Jews had left the synagogue the Gentiles begged Paul to preach the same words to them the next Sabbath. And when the Sabbath came almost the whole of the city was gathered together to hear him.



PAUL COMMANDING THE CRIPPLE TO STAND UP.

The Jews, seeing the multitude, were angry, and spoke against the truths that Paul had taught, but the apostles spoke boldly to the Jews, saying, It was necessary that we should preach the gospel to you first; but seeing you will not hear it, we turn to the Gentiles, for so hath God com-

manded us, saying that his Son should be a Saviour for all people.

The Gentiles were glad when they heard this, but the Jews raised a persecution against Paul and Barnabas, and they were driven out of Antioch and came to Iconium. At Iconium they taught in the synagogue, and a great multitude, **both of Jews and Gentiles, believed.**

PAUL AND BARNABAS AT LYSTRA.

The unbelieving Jews stirred up the Gentiles, and made them think evil of the apostles. Yet Paul and Barnabas were bold, and God gave them power to do many miracles among the people.

After a while both Jews and Gentiles turned against them, and went about to stone them; but Paul and Barnabas fled to Lystra, and there preached the gospel.

While preaching here, a lame man listened with great at-

tention. Paul, seeing he had faith, said aloud to him, Stand upright on thy feet. And the man leaped and walked.

This miracle led the people to cry out, The gods have come down to us, in the likeness of men. And they called Barnabas Jupiter, and Paul Mercurius, because he was the chief speaker. The priests from the temple of Jupiter brought oxen and garlands of flowers and would have sacrificed to the apostles; but Paul and Barnabas hearing of it rent their clothes and said to the people, Sirs, why do ye these things? We are only men like yourselves, and preach, persuading you to turn from idols and worship the living God, who sends rain from heaven and fruitful seasons; yet they could scarcely keep the people from sacrificing to them.

But the Jews prejudiced the minds of the people against the apostles, so that instead of desiring to worship them they tried to kill them. And they stoned Paul till they thought he was dead, and dragged him out of the city.

The next day Paul and Barnabas went to Derbe, where they preached the gospel and made many converts. Then they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, exhorting the believers to remain steadfast in spite of persecution. They appointed elders in every church, and then sailed to Antioch. There they called the whole church together, and told them all that God had done by them, and how the gospel had been sent to the Gentiles as well as to the Jews.

CHAPTER XLVII.

DISSENSION ARISES AT ANTIOCH—PAUL AND BARNABAS SEPARATE — TIMOTHY — PAUL AND SILAS IN PRISON — AN EARTHQUAKE OPENS THE PRISON DOORS — THE JAILER AND HIS HOUSEHOLD BAPTIZED — THE MAGISTRATES ENTREAT THEM TO LEAVE THE PRISON — PAUL PREACHES AT ATHENS.

The peace of the church at Antioch was soon marred by certain men that came there from Judea and taught the brethren that except they observe the law of Moses they could not be saved.

Paul and Barnabas told them that since Jesus came there was no need of sacrifices. They refused to believe this, but agreed to go with him to Jerusalem and have the question decided. Peter told them they were those that God had chosen to carry the gospel to the Gentiles, and that God had given them the Holy Spirit as well as the Jews, and he asked them why they should desire to put a yoke on the neck of the disciples which neither they nor their fathers could bear.

Then the apostles and elders chose two men, Judas and Silas, to go back to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas, and sent letters by them to the Christians in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia, telling them they need no longer offer up animals as sacrifices to God. God wanted them now simply to love him and keep his commandments, to believe in Jesus, and lead lives of purity and goodness.

So Paul, Barnabas, Judas, and Silas came to Antioch, and gathered the disciples together, and gave them the letters which the apostles and elders had sent. And the disciples rejoiced when they read that they could worship God as well in their homes as they could in the temple at Jerusalem.

Some days after, Paul proposed to Barnabas that they should visit the brethren in every city where they had preached and see how they were prospering. Barnabas proposed they should take Mark with them. Paul thought it not best to take Mark, who left them and the work before. And there was murmuring between them; and they separated, Barnabas taking Mark and sailing to Cyprus, while Paul, having chosen Silas, went through Syria and Asia Minor.

Paul came to Lystra again, and found there a young man named Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess and his father a Greek. From his childhood he knew the Scriptures and served the Lord; and Paul chose him to go with himself and Silas and spread the gospel.

When they came to Troas Paul had a vision in the night, in which he saw standing before him a man, who said, Come over to Macedonia and help us. And Paul and those who were with him sailed from Troas and came to Philippi. On the Sabbath day they went to a place by the river-side, where prayer was wont to be made; and they talked to the

women who came there, amongst whom was one Lydia, a seller of purple, whose heart the Lord had opened; and she gave attention to the teachings of the apostles, and was baptized and all her household. And she urged the apostles to tarry at her house, and they abode there.

TIMOTHY, WHEN A CHILD, READING THE SCRIPTURES.

One day as they were going to prayer a damsel possessed of an evil spirit met them. She was a slave and had brought her masters much gain by pretending to tell what was going to happen. She followed Paul and his companions, saying, These men are the servants of the Most High God, who show you the way to be saved. She continued this for many days,

but Paul being grieved, turned and said to the demon, I command thee, in the name of Jesus Christ, to come out of her. And the evil spirit came out of her that very hour. When the masters of the young woman saw they could make no more money out of her, they were very angry, and brought Paul and Silas before the rulers, and accused them of troubling the city and of teaching customs which Romans should not observe.

And the rulers commanded that they should be scourged. They beat them with many stripes, and put them into the inner prison, and made their feet fast in the stocks.

At midnight Paul and Silas sang praises unto God so that the other prisoners could hear them. A great earthquake suddenly shook the prison, and all the doors flew open, and the chains fell from off the prisoners. The keeper of the prison woke out of sleep, and seeing the doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had fled. But Paul cried with a loud voice, Do thyself no harm, for we are all here. Then the jailer called for a light, and came trembling into the inner prison where Paul and Silas were, and fell at their feet and cried, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? They answered, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved and thy house.

And the jailer and all his household believed and were baptized.

Then the jailer washed the wounds of Paul and Silas, and took them to his own house and set food before them. And the jailer rejoiced that he and his family were led to believe in Jesus.

In the morning the rulers sent word to the jailer to give the apostles their liberty; and the jailer told Paul. But Paul refused to leave, stating that he was a Roman citizen, and as such should not have been scourged. He said that if the magistrates wanted them to leave the prison, that they, the magistrates themselves, must come and take them out, that the people might know they were punished unjustly.

When the rulers heard that Paul was a Roman they were afraid lest they should be punished, and they came and begged them to go out of the city.

Then Paul and Silas left the prison and went to the house of Lydia, and after they had met the disciples and comforted them, they left Philippi.

They went on to Thessalonica, where was a synagogue, and in it for three Sabbaths Paul preached to the Jews, showing

MAGISTRATES ENTREATING PAUL AND SILAS TO LEAVE PRISON.

them from the Scriptures that the one spoken of by Moses and the prophets was Jesus the Saviour.

The unbelieving Jews became angry, and gathered together wicked men and made a great uproar in the city, and went and sought Paul and Silas to bring them before the people. Not being able to find them, they brought Jason, at whose house the apostles stayed, before the rulers, and said, These

Christians have made trouble in other places, and have come here now. They do not respect Cæsar, and they say there is another king, one Jesus; and this Jason has received them into his house. The rulers were troubled, and bound Jason and his companions to keep the peace; and the brethren in Thessalonica sent Paul and Silas away by night to Berea. Here they went into the synagogue to preach to the Jews, who were more noble than those of Thessalonica. They listened to the apostles' doctrine and searched the Scriptures daily for themselves, and many of them believed and became Christians.

The Jews who raised so much disturbance came to Berea to oppose Paul, but the brethren sent him away, and Silas and Timotheus remained. Paul next went to Athens, the chief city of Greece, in which were many fine buildings. The Athenians were a very learned people, but wholly given to idolatry. One inscription on one of their altars was, To The Unknown God. Paul was much grieved, and preached the gospel to the Jews in their synagogue and in the market-place. Their philosophers, who had strange notions about God, said that he seemed to be a setter-forth of strange gods, because he preached unto them Jesus and the resurrection.

They brought Paul to Mars Hill, and asked him to explain the gospel he preached. The Athenians spent their time either hearing or telling some new thing. Then Paul addressed them, saying, Ye men of Athens, ye are too religious in the worship of your gods. I saw this inscription on your altars, To The Unknown God, and this God, whom ye ignorantly worship, I now preach unto you. God is the Creator of the world and all that is in it. He gives to all life and breath. He does not live in temples made with hands, nor is he like the idols made of gold, silver, or stone. While men knew no better than to worship such, God did not punish them; but now he calls men to repent and believe in Jesus, because the world will be judged by him whom God hath raised from the dead.

When they heard of the resurrection, some mocked; others said, We will hear thee again of this matter, while a few believed.

Paul left Athens and went to Corinth, where he found a Jew named Aquila with his wife Priscilla. Aquila was a tent-maker, and as Paul worked at the same trade he stayed with Aquila. On the Sabbath he preached to the Jews and Greeks in the synagogue and told them that Jesus was the Christ, but the Jews opposed him and blasphemed.

And Paul shook his raiment and said, Your blood be upon

PAUL PREACHING AT ATHENS.

your own heads; if you are not saved, the blame will be yours. I will go to the Gentiles.

God appeared to Paul in a vision by night, and told him not to be afraid, but to preach the gospel boldly to the people, for he was with him, and no man should harm him.

Paul staid in Corinth a year and six months, preaching the gospel; but the Jews rose up against him, and brought him before the governor, saying, This fellow persuades men to

worship God contrary to the law. Paul was about to reply, but the governor said, If there was any real charge I would listen to you, but if it be only a question of words and names, I will be no judge of such matters. And he ordered them away. The Gentiles were angry at the Jews for the way they treated Paul, and they beat the chief ruler of the synagogue even before the judgment-seat, but Gallio, the governor was quite indifferent about the whole matter.

CHAPTER XLVIII.

PAUL AT EPHESUS — DEMETRIUS THE SILVERSMITH RAISES AN UPROAR — THE TOWN-CLERK QUIETS IT — EUTYCHUS RAISED TO LIFE — PAUL LEAVES EPHESUS AND TYRE AND GOES TO JERUSALEM — THE JEWS ATTEMPT TO KILL HIM — RESCUED BY THE CHIEF CAPTAIN — ADDRESSES THE PEOPLE — IS SENT UNDER A STRONG GUARD TO FELIX, THE GOVERNOR.

When Paul left Corinth he went to Ephesus, where he remained for nearly three years preaching the gospel. God gave him power to work great miracles. Handkerchiefs and aprons which he touched, when taken to those who were sick or had evil spirits, they were made well. There were Jews who claimed that they could cast out evil spirits, and they spoke to them, saying, We command you in Jesus' name to come out. But the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye? And the man in whom the evil spirit was, leaped on them and overcame them, so that they fled, naked and wounded.

Many who believed came to Paul and confessed their sins, and others who pretended they could work magic brought their books and burned them where all could see them.

The books burned were worth fifty thousand pieces of silver, but the owners preferred to suffer the loss rather than continue in sin.

The people at Ephesus were idolaters and worshipped the

goddess Diana, and in a temple which was considered one of the wonders of the world.

Built of white marble, it stood on high ground at the head of the harbor. The wood-work was of cypress and cedar, inlaid with gold, silver, and precious stones. It took two hundred and twenty years to build it, and it was very beautiful.

Diana, the goddess, who was worshipped in it, the Ephesians said, came down from heaven. There were silversmiths at Ephesus who made little models of this temple and sold them to the people, and in this way made a good deal of money.

Some of these miniature temples were made of gold, some of silver, and some of wood. One of the smiths, named Demetrius, heard Paul denounce idolatry and saw that many renounced it, and he called the workmen together and said unto them, Sirs, you know that by making these shrines we get our wealth. Now this Paul has persuaded many persons not only at Ephesus, but through nearly all of Asia Minor, that these are false gods, so there is danger, not only that we cannot sell our shrines, but also that the great goddess Diana will not be worshipped any longer.

When the workmen heard these things they became very angry, and cried out, saying, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! They seized Gaius and Aristarchus, two men that had come with Paul from Macedonia, and all rushed together into the theatre. Paul wanted to go in and speak to the people, but the disciples would not allow him lest they should be injured.

There was great confusion in the theatre, and one named Alexander stood up and motioned with his hand for the crowd to listen to what he had to say. When they saw he was a Jew they would not listen, but they all cried out, Great is Diana of the Ephesians! for the space of two hours. Then the town-clerk came in and said, Ye men of Ephesus, since it is well known that the people of our city worship the great goddess Diana ye ought to be quiet and do nothing rashly. Ye have brought these men here, and they neither rob churches nor blaspheme your goddess. If Demetrius and the craftsmen with him have a complaint against these men, let them make it

before the court, for we are in danger of being held responsible for all this day's uproar. Then he dismissed the people. When the uproar ceased Paul called the disciples to him and bade them farewell, and went to Macedonia, where he preached the gospel, and then came to Troas in Asia.

On the first day of the week, when the disciples were gathered together to eat bread and drink wine, Paul preached to them. While he was preaching a young man named Eutychus fell asleep, and falling from the third story was thought to be dead. But Paul told them not to be troubled, because his life was yet in him. And his friends took him up and rejoiced that he had recovered.

Paul left next morning, and coming to Troas, sailed from thence to Miletus. He did not wish to go to Ephesus, though he wanted to see the elders of the Church in that city. So he sent for them to come and meet him. When they came he said to them, You know how I have lived during the three years which I spent among you, how I served the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears and temptations, which were caused by the Jews; how I kept back nothing that was profitable for you, but have taught you publicly, and from house to house, telling both Jews and Gentiles that in order to be saved they must repent of their sins and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there, except that I am warned by the Holy Spirit that bonds and afflictions wait for me; but none of these things move me, and I am ready to die if necessary that men may enjoy the blessings of the gospel. And now I know that you shall see my face no more. I have told you the whole counsel of God, hence I am free from the blood of all men.

Paul knelt down and prayed with them. And they all wept sore, and fell on his neck and kissed him, and were very sorry that they would not see him again. And they went with him to the ship that was to take him from Miletus, and in which he came to the city of Tyre, where he found some disciples with whom he staid seven days. When leaving Tyre, the brethren with their wives and children came with

him to the shore, where they all knelt down together and prayed.

Paul and those that were with him bade them farewell and went into the ship. And the disciples returned home. Paul came to the city of Cæsarea and went to the house of Philip the Evangelist, who was one of the seven appointed by the apostles. While here a prophet named Agabus came from

PAUL LEAVING EPHESUS.

Judea, who took Paul's girdle and bound his own hands as a symbol of the manner in which the Jews would bind at Jerusalem the owner of the girdle, who was Paul.

When the disciples heard this prophecy they besought Paul not to go to Jerusalem. Paul asked them, Why do ye weep, to break mine heart? for I am willing not only to be bound, but also to die at Jerusalem, if necessary, for the sake

of the Lord Jesus. Seeing that he was determined to go, they said, The Lord's will be done.

Then Paul and his companions left Cæsarea for Jerusalem,

PAUL LEAVING TYRE.

where the brethren received him gladly. He visited the house of James, where he met all the elders, whom he told of the work God had wrought among the Gentiles by his minis-

try. And the elders were glad, and praised the Lord for what had been done.

The next day Paul and the men who were with him purified themselves and went up to the temple. Some Jews from Asia were there; and when they saw him they told the people that he taught everywhere that the laws of Moses should not be obeyed. They also said that he had polluted the temple by bringing Gentiles into the holy place. And all the city was moved, and they took Paul and drew him out of the temple and were about to kill him.

The chief captain heard of it and came with his soldiers. And when the people saw them they left off beating Paul. The captain gave orders that he should be bound with chains, and demanded who he was and what he had done.

Some said one thing, some another; and as the captain could not find out because of the great din and uproar, he commanded the soldiers to take him to the castle.

Going up the stairs leading to the castle, the soldiers had to carry Paul because of the violence of the people, some of them crying, Away with him! As Paul was being led into the castle he asked the chief captain if he might speak to him.

The captain said, Can you speak Greek? Are you not the Egyptian that made the uproar and led four thousand men who were murderers out into the wilderness?

Paul replied, I am a Jew of Tarsus, in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city, and I ask you to allow me to speak to the people. Being allowed to speak, Paul stood on the stairs and beckoned with his hand that the people should be still. And when they were silent he spake to them in Hebrew, saying, Brethren and fathers, I am a Jew, born in Tarsus and brought up in this city at the feet of Gamaliel, and taught by him the laws of Moses. I persecuted those who did not obey the laws even unto death in my mistaken zeal. The high priests and all the elders know of this, for they gave me letters to the Jews at Damascus that I might arrest the Christians there and bring them to Jerusalem. On the way to Damascus suddenly a great light from heaven shone all around me, and I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why per-

secutest thou me? And I answered, Who art thou, Lord? The voice said, I am Jesus of Nazareth whom thou persecutest.

Those who were with me saw the light and were afraid, but they heard not the voice of him that spake to me. And I said, What shall I do, Lord? and the Lord said, Arise, and go into Damascus, and you shall be told what to do. I could not see for the glory of the light, but being led by the hand of those with me I came to Damascus.

Then a disciple, named Ananias, a devout man, came to me and said, Brother Saul, receive thy sight; and the same hour I could see him. And he said, God hath chosen you that you should know his will, and see Jesus and hear his voice and witness to all men what you have seen and heard. And once again, while praying in the temple, I saw Jesus in a vision, and he said to me, Make haste and go quickly out of Jerusalem, for the Jews will not believe your testimony concerning me, so I will send you to the Gentiles.

As soon as he mentioned the Gentiles as receiving the gospel, they cried out, Away with such a fellow, for he is not fit to live; and they cast off their clothes and threw dust into the air. The chief captain commanded that Paul should be brought into the castle and scourged to make him confess what evil he was guilty of. As they bound him with thongs he said, Is it lawful to scourge a Roman before he is found guilty? The centurion told the captain to be careful what he did, because Paul was a Roman. The captain came and said to Paul, Tell me, art thou a Roman? Paul answered, Yes. And the captain said, With a great sum I obtained that freedom. Paul said, I was free-born. Then the soldiers left him, and the captain was afraid for he had bound him, lest he might be punished.

Next day the chief captain wanted to know of what the Jews accused Paul. And he commanded the chief priests and all the Council of the Sanhedrim to come together, and he brought Paul before them. Paul looked earnestly upon them and said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day. Ananias the high priest commanded them that stood by to smite him on the mouth.

Paul said, God shall smite thee, thou hypocrite. Do you sit to judge me after the Law and command me to be smitten contrary to the Law? Those that stood by said, Dost thou revile the high priest? Paul replied, I did not know, brethren, that he was the high priest; for it is written in the Law, Thou shalt not speak evil of the ruler of thy people.

THE SOLDIERS ABOUT TO BIND PAUL FOR THE TORTURE.

Now the Sanhedrim was composed of Pharisees and Sadducees, and when Paul tried to speak again a great strife arose between the two parties; and the chief captain being afraid that Paul might be killed, told the soldiers to bring him by force to the castle.

The next night the Lord Jesus came and stood by him

and said, Be of good cheer, Paul, for as you have spoken of me in Jerusalem you must bear witness of me also at Rome.

Next day, about forty Jews bound themselves under a curse that they would neither eat nor drink till they had killed Paul. And they told the chief priests and elders of it, and asked them to request the chief captain to bring the apostle again before the Sanhedrim, pretending to consider his case more perfectly. And while he is being brought, they said, we will come and kill him.

But Paul's sister's son heard of their plot and went into the castle and told Paul of it. Paul then told one of the centurions to bring his nephew to the chief captain. When the young man saw the chief captain he said, The Jews have agreed to ask you to bring Paul to-morrow into the Council, pretending to inquire more correctly into his case; but do not listen to them, for forty men, bound under oath, lie in wait to kill him.

The chief captain told the young man not to tell any one of these things. He was alarmed, and called to him two centurions, saying, Make ready two hundred soldiers, and seventy horsemen, and two hundred spearmen to go to Cæsarea at the third hour of the night, and send beasts on which Paul and the men that are with him shall ride, and bring him safe to Felix, the governor. And the chief captain wrote a letter to the governor, stating, This man was taken by the Jews, who were about to kill him. I, with an army, rescued him, having heard he was a Roman. I brought him before their Council and found no charge against him worthy of death or of bonds. Hearing they were still determined to kill him, I have sent him to thee, and have told the Jews to appear against him before thee.

The soldiers brought Paul that night to Antipatres, which was on the road to Cæsarea. On the morrow the soldiers returned to the castle, while the horsemen brought Paul to the governor.

When the governor read the letter of the chief captain he asked Paul in what province he was born. Paul said Cilicia.

And the governor said, I will hear thee when thine accusers are also come. And he gave orders that Paul be kept in Herod's judgment-hall.

CHAPTER XLIX.

PAUL ARRAIGNED BEFORE FELIX — FESTUS — PAUL APPEALS TO CÆSAR — HIS DEFENCE BEFORE KING AGRIPPA — AGRIPPA ALMOST PERSUADED TO BE A CHRISTIAN.

FIVE days after Paul had left Jerusalem Ananias the high priest came with the elders from Jerusalem to Cæsarea. Along with them came an orator named Tertullus to inform the governor against Paul. When Paul appeared before the governor Tertullus said, We have found this man a mischievous fellow, stirring up trouble among the Jews, and he is a ringleader among those who believe in Jesus of Nazareth. He has brought Gentiles into the temple and profaned it. We would have tried him by our law, but the chief captain took him from us by force, and told us to come before thee and accuse him. By examining us, his accusers, you may see that we have not accused him wrongfully. The Jews affirmed that these things were so. The governor then beckoned to Paul to speak, and Paul said, It is only twelve days since I went up to Jerusalem to worship in the temple, and I neither disputed with any man nor raised up the people either in the synagogue or the city, nor can they prove the things whereof they now accuse me. But I confess that I worship God in a way they call heresy, though I believe all things written in the law and the prophets, and I have hope toward God that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and of the unjust. On account of this belief I seek not to offend my conscience. I returned to Jerusalem, having been absent many years, bringing alms to the poor Jews resident in that city, and also offerings for the temple.

Certain Jews from Asia found me purified in the temple, and I was not with the crowd nor making any disturbance. They are the ones who should be here to accuse me, if they had aught against me. Let those here say if they have found any evil in me, while I stood before the Council in Jerusalem, except it was a crime to preach that the dead should rise from their graves at the judgment.

Then Felix said, When Lysias the chief captain comes I will know all about the matter; and he told the centurion to keep Paul, and to let him have liberty, and see any of his friends that might want to visit him.

After some days Felix sent for Paul to come and speak to him and to his wife Drusilla concerning the faith of Christ. And as Paul spoke of righteousness, temperance, and judgment to come, Felix trembled. Yet he did not repent of his sins, but sent Paul back to prison, saying, Go thy way for this time; when it is convenient I will call for thee again. He hoped also that Paul would have given him money to obtain his liberty. And on that account sent for him often to talk with him.

But after two years Porcius Festus took the place of Felix, and Felix, in order to please the Jews, left Paul in prison.

Festus, the new governor, came to Cæsarea, and after three days went to Jerusalem, where the high priests and the chief of the Jews spoke to him against Paul and begged that he might be sent back to Jerusalem, while they had planned to have men hidden by the way who would have killed him. But Festus answered, Paul is in prison at Cæsarea, and as I am going to that city in a few days, let those who wish to accuse Paul go with me.

After ten days Festus returned to Cæsarea and the next day sat on the judgment-seat, and commanded Paul to be brought. And when he was come the Jews made grievous complaints against him which they could not prove. Paul answered for himself and said, Neither against the laws of the Jews, nor against the temple, nor yet against Cæsar have I offended anything at all. But Festus, wishing to please the Jews, asked Paul, Art thou willing to go up to Jerusalem, and there be judged of these things before me? Said Paul, I stand at Cæsar's judgment-seat, where I ought to be judged. Any Roman in danger of being put to death might ask to be tried before the Emperor, who would determine whether he should live or die. Paul knew that the Jews were determined to kill him; therefore he said to Festus that he had done no wrong to the Jews, as Festus very well knew, and then he appealed to Cæsar.

Festus conferred with the Council, and then said to Paul, Hast thou appealed unto Cæsar? Unto Cæsar thou shalt go. After certain days King Agrippa and Bernice came unto Cæsarea to salute Festus. The latter told the king about Paul, saying, There is a prisoner here whom the chief priests and elders of the Jews have asked me to condemn to death. But I told them before condemning a man the accused and the accusers must be brought face to face, and the accused allowed to answer for himself. Agrippa said he was anxious to hear Paul himself, and Festus told the king that he could hear him to-morrow. On the morrow Agrippa and Bernice came in great pomp with the chief captains and principal men of the city; and Festus commanded Paul to be brought before him. When he came Festus introduced the prisoner as one who had greatly enraged the Jews, but who, as far as he could see, was not guilty of crime. And Agrippa said unto Paul, You are permitted to speak for yourself. Then Paul said, I am happy, King Agrippa, because I am allowed to answer the accusations made against me by the Jews, particularly because I know you are familiar with all the customs and questions among the Jews.

My manner of life since a child is known to the Jews. I was a strict Pharisee, and thought that I ought to do many things against Jesus of Nazareth. I have imprisoned many of the saints, and when they were put to death spoke against them. I punished them and persecuted them, even unto strange cities, and I went to Damascus with authority and commission from the chief priests. And at midday, O King, a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun shone around me and those travelling with me; and when we had fallen to the ground I heard a voice saying, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he replied, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest, and have come to make you a minister and a witness of the things that you have seen. I at once obeyed the vision, and went and preached to the Jews at Damascus and Jerusalem and through all the coasts of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God. On account of this the Jews caught me in the temple and were about to kill me; but having ob

tained help of God I have continued until this day witnessing that Christ has suffered and died and showed light unto the Gentiles.

While Paul spoke thus Festus said with a loud voice, Paul, thou art beside thyself; much learning hath made thee mad. But Paul said, I am not mad, most noble Festus, but am speaking truth with soberness. The king knows these things. King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. Agrippa replied, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.

Paul said, I wish that not only thou, but all who hear me, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these chains.

Then the king rose up, and the governor, and Bernice, and those that sat with him, and went aside and talked among themselves, and said, This man has done nothing for which he should be put to death, or kept in bonds. And Agrippa said to Festus, This man might have been set at liberty if he had not appealed unto Cæsar.

CHAPTER L.

PAUL SETS SAIL FOR ROME — IS SHIPWRECKED — PAUL AND THE VIPER—HE HEALS PUBLIUS' FATHER AND OTHERS—PAUL ARRIVES AT ROME—PREACHES TO THE JEWS THERE —IS BEHEADED UNDER NERO—MARTYRDOM OF ST. PETER.

Festus gave Paul and some other prisoners into the care of the centurion, who took soldiers with him to guard them on the way to Rome to appear before Cæsar. The ship in which they sailed stopped at various ports along the coasts of Asia. At Sidon the centurion allowed Paul to visit his friends in that city. Leaving Sidon, they sailed close to the island of Cyprus because the winds were against them, and then went northwest to the city of Myra. There the centurion took his prisoners on board another ship bound for Italy. Sailing slowly for many days, they came to a place, Fair

Havens, in the island of Crete. Leaving this port a storm arose, and Paul told the master of the ship that the voyage would be one of great danger to the persons on board as well as to the ship and cargo.

PAUL'S SHIPWRECK.

The sailors found it impossible to steer the ship, and they let her go wherever the wind might drive her. They saw neither the sun nor moon for many days. A great tempest lay upon them, and they threw out some of the cargo to light-

en the ship. Paul said to them, Sirs, ye should have remained at Crete as I told you; but be of good cheer, not one on the ship shall be lost. This night an angel of the Lord stood by me, and said, Fear not, Paul; you must be brought before Cæsar, and lo, God hath given thee all that sail with thee; and I believe it shall be as God hath said.

When the fourteenth night was come the ship was driven along through the Adriatic Sea; and the sailors, hearing the breakers, thought they were near land, and they took soundings and found they were in shallow waters. Fearing they would strike the rocks, they cast forth anchors out of the stern and wished for day. But the sailors, expecting the ship to go to pieces, let down the small boat into the sea, intending to escape.

But Paul said to the centurion, Except these sailors stay in the ship ye cannot be saved. Then the soldiers cut the ropes which held the boat, and it drifted off empty into the darkness. When it was near morning Paul begged them all to take some food, saying, This is the fourteenth day since the storm began, and ye have eaten little or nothing. Take some food to keep up your strength, for no harm shall come to any of you. Then he took bread, and gave thanks to God before them all, and began to eat. And all the rest ate with him. When it was day they could not see the land, but seeing a creek with a beach they determined if they could to thrust the ship into it. They took up the anchors, and hoisting the sail steered towards the place. But the ship ran aground and the fore-part stuck fast and could not be moved, while the hinder part was broken by the violence of the waves.

The soldiers advised the centurion to kill the prisoners lest they should escape, but the centurion wanted to save Paul, and told them to do the prisoners no harm; and gave orders that those who could swim should first cast themselves into the water and make for the shore.

The rest went on boards and on broken pieces of the ship, and all reached land in safety. They found they were on the island Melita, where the people were very kind to them and kindled a fire, at which they might dry and warm themselves. Paul gathered a bundle of sticks and put them on the fire;

and after he laid them on, a viper came out of the heat and fastened on his hand. When the people saw this they said, No doubt this man is a murderer, and though he escaped drowning in the sea, yet now he is being punished as he deserves. But Paul shook off the viper and was unhurt, and when they saw that he did not drop down dead, they said, He is a God.

PAUL ARRIVES AT ROME.

Publius was the chief man of the island, and he invited Paul and those that were with him to his house, where they staid three days and were kindly treated. The father of Publius was sick of a fever, but Paul laid his hands on him and he became well. Then others that had diseases came and were healed. They were grateful and made many presents to Paul and his friends, of such things as they would need on the voyage.

After three months the centurion and his soldiers, with Paul and the other ship, left in a ship of Alexandria that had wintered in the island, and came to the city of Puteoli, where they remained seven days with some brethren who lived there and then went on foot to Rome.

The brethren at Rome, hearing that Paul was coming, went to meet him as far as Apii-forum and the Three Taverns. And when Paul saw them he thanked God and took courage.

On entering Rome the centurion delivered the prisoners to the captain of the guard, but they let Paul live by himself, with the soldier who kept him and to whom he was chained.

After three days Paul called the chief of the Jews together, and said to them, Men and brethren, though I have committed nothing against the people or customs of our fathers, yet the Jews at Jerusalem gave me as a prisoner to the Romans, who, when they had examined me, would have let me go, because I had done nothing worthy of death.

But when the Jews were determined to kill me I appealed unto Cæsar. I have sent for you that I might speak with you, for it is because that I believe that Jesus is the Saviour promised to the Jews that I am bound with this chain.

The Jews answered him and said, We have had no letters from Jerusalem about thee, nor have the Jews who came from there spoken against thee, but we would like to hear what you preach about; as for these Christians, they are everywhere spoken against.

When they appointed a day many of the Roman Jews came to him in his lodgings, and he expounded the Scriptures to them, and talked to them of Jesus, both out of the Law of Moses and out of the Prophets, from morning till evening.

Some believed what he said, and some did not; and they disputed among themselves. Paul said unto them, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Isaiah the prophet unto our fathers, saying, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shalt not perceive. Be it known unto you that this gospel is sent unto the Gentiles, and they will hear it.

Paul lived two whole years at Rome in his own hired house

receiving all who came to him and preaching the gospel with all confidence, none trying to hinder him.

It is believed that Paul was beheaded under Nero at the time when that cruel emperor set fire to Rome and then accused the Christians of it, and in consequence had many of them put to death.

Peter was crucified, because he was a Jew and crucifixion

MARTYRDOM OF ST. PETER.

was the Jewish mode of death, while Paul, being a Roman, it was contrary to their law to crucify him.

We have many letters in the New Testament which were written by the apostles to the churches which were established by their labors. They are really letters from God, as the apostles were inspired by the Holy Spirit to write them, and they were written not only for the benefit

of the churches to which they were addressed, but also for the benefit of all Christian churches which shall exist in the world.

There are twenty-one epistles written by the different apostles. They contain statements of doctrine, experience, and duties pertaining to believers towards God, such as reverence, worship, and love towards our brethren, in assisting them as far as we can to be good, and pure, and happy; and to ourselves in being like Christ, being filled with the Spirit of God, and ever rejoicing in Christ our Saviour.

CHAPTER LI.

THE REVELATION OF SAINT JOHN.

This is the last book in the Bible, and is called Revelation because most of its contents are a real revelation by the

SAINT JOHN.

Lord Jesus Christ, as the Risen Saviour and Head of His Church, to the apostle John.

These revelations were made to St. John while he was in banishment on a desolate island named Patmos.

Here the Lord appeared to him in a vision, clothed in a garment reaching down to his feet, and having a golden girdle

around his breast. His head and his hairs were like wool, and as white as snow; his eyes as a flame of fire; his feet like unto fine brass; his voice as the sound of many waters. He had in his right hand seven stars; a sharp two-edged sword

PATMOS.

went out of his mouth, and his countenance was as the sun when he shines in his strength.

When John saw him, he fell at his feet as if dead; but Jesus laid his right hand upon him and told him not to fear, because, though he was dead, he now lives forevermore, and has the keys of hell and of death

Jesus then gave John seven messages to the seven Christian churches which were in Asia, one to each. Each message was of the kind suited to their spiritual condition, showing

ST. JOHN'S VISION.

their faults, commending their virtues, and urging them to all goodness and purity.

Having received these messages, he was directed to a door opened in heaven, and heard a voice like a trumpet, which

said, Come up hither, and I will show thee the things which must be hereafter.

He saw a throne, and One sitting on it who looked like a jasper and sardine stone, and there was a rainbow round about the throne which was like an emerald.

Around the throne were elders in white garments with

THE BOOK OPENED.

crowns of gold on their heads. Before the throne was a sea of glass. And the four and twenty elders cast their crowns before the throne, and worshipped him that sat thereon. On the right hand of him who sat on the throne was a book close sealed with seven seals.

And a strong angel asked, Who is worthy to open the book and break the seals? And no man in heaven, or on the earth,

nor under the earth was able to open the book, nor to look thereon.

Then John wept because of this; but one of the elders told him not to weep, because the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, could open it.

And John heard a song sung in praise of the Saviour, saying, Thou art worthy to open the seals of the book, for thou hast redeemed us to God by thy blood.

And John saw a great multitude which no man could number standing before the throne, clothed with white robes and having palms in their hands. And they cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God, that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And the angels that stood round about the throne fell on their faces, and worshipped God, saying, Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honor, and power, and might be unto our God forever and ever.

And one of the angels said to John, Who are these in white robes, and where do they come from? John said, Sir, thou knowest. The angel said, These are they that came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. Therefore are they before the throne of God, and they serve him day and night in his temple, and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more, neither shall the sun strike on them nor any heat, for the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them and lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Then John was shown what dreadful things would come upon the wicked who would not repent of their sins and believe in Christ.

After this John saw a great white throne; and Jesus sat upon it; and he saw the dead rise from their graves and stand before the throne that they might be judged. The books in which their names were written and all that they had done while they lived upon the earth, were opened, and they were judged according to what was written in those books.

The Book of Life was also opened. In it were written the

names of those who believed in and loved Jesus, and all whose names were not in the Book of Life were cast into the Lake of Fire.

After the vision of the Judgment Day, John saw a new heaven and a new earth, where everything was beautiful, and in which was no sin. And he saw a beautiful city, the New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven. And he heard a voice which said, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them and be their God.

A great and high wall was around the city, in which were twelve gates, and at each gate there was an angel.

The streets of the city were of pure gold; its walls were of precious stones, and each of its gates was one large pearl.

The city needed no sun nor moon to shine upon it, for the Lamb is the light thereof. The people of all nations who have been washed in the blood of the Lamb shall walk in it, and the kings of the earth shall bow down before him.

The gates of the city shall not be shut by night, for there shall be no night, and only those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life shall enter therein.

In vision John also saw a river, which is the River of the Water of Life, clear as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb. On either side of this river rose the Tree of Life, which bears fruit of twelve different kinds.

Those who live in the city have a right to the waters of the river and the fruit of the tree. They behold the face of the Redeemer, and serve him day and night in his temple.

"O Heaven of Heavens! how true thy life must be.
O Home of God, how excellent thy light!
O long, long summer of Eternity—
Bright noon of angels ever clear and bright."

FINIS.

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Y0-EJL-449